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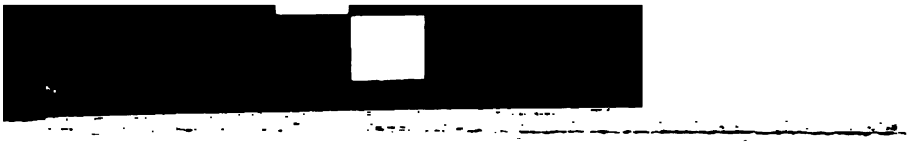

NAPOLEON

AND

HIS DETRACTORS.

BY

HIS IMPERIAL HIGHNESS

PRINCE NAPOLEON.

TRANSLATED AND EDITED WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND NOTES

BY

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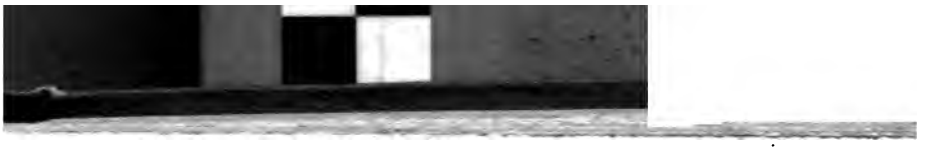

A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

PRINCE NAPOLEON.

JÉRÔME BONAPARTE, brother of Napoleon, and fifth son of Charles Marie Bonaparte, and of Lætitia Ramolino, was born at Ajaccio (Corsica) November 15, 1784.

On December 24, 1803, he married Miss Elizabeth Paterson, by whom he had issue a son, Jérôme Bonaparte, born July 7, 1805, at Camberwell, in the county of Surrey, and from whom he separated in April 1805.

After the accession of Napoleon to the Empire, Jérôme's marriage was annulled for State reasons in

1807, and on August 22, 1807, he married Princess Frederica Catherine Sophia Dorothea, daughter of King Frederic I. of Wurtemberg.

He was made King of Westphalia by Napoleon, and reigned from December 1, 1807, to October 26, 1813. The only unpleasantness the Emperor had with him was on account of his marriage with Miss Paterson. Jérôme ever remained faithful to Napoleon, and, without waiting to be called upon, sacrificed his crown for him. He was brave even to temerity, and always maintained the dignity of his illustrious name.

In 1814 he was created Prince de Montfort by his father-in-law; in 1848 King Louis Philippe appointed him Governor of the "Invalides";* and, in 1850, his nephew, President Prince Louis Napoleon, afterwards Napoleon III., created him Marshal of France.

Of his second marriage were born: at Stuttgart, Jérôme Napoleon, August 24, 1814; at Trieste,

* The French military hospital for veteran soldiers or sailors.

Mathilda Lætitia Wilhelmina, May 22, 1820; and, also at Trieste, Napoleon Joseph Charles Paul, generally known under the name of "Prince Napoleon," the subject of this sketch, September 9, 1822.

Jérôme Napoleon followed his father in exile to Goppingen, to the castle of Elwangen, to Hamburg, to Trieste, to Rome, to Florence, and to Lausanne. He eventually entered the army of his uncle, William I., King of Wurtemberg, and obtained the brevet of colonel in the 8th regiment of the line. He performed his duties in that capacity until 1840, when the declining state of his health compelled him to resign. He then led a secluded life in the company of his father in Florence, where he died May 12, 1847. He was known under the name of the Prince de Montfort, which title had been given to his father by the King of Wurtemberg, as mentioned above.

Jérôme's daughter, better known by the name of "Princess Mathilde," was married, November 1840, to Prince Anatol Demidoff de San-Donato. Five years later, she obtained a judicial separation

from him, and the Czar Nicholas, who was first cousin to Princess Catherine of Wurtemberg, compelled Prince Demidoff to pay Princess Mathilde an annuity of 200,000 francs (£8,000).

Napoleon Joseph Charles Paul Bonaparte, usually known under the name of "Prince Napoleon," and the illustrious author of the following work, was born, as said above, at Trieste on September 9, 1822.

He spent his early youth in Rome, where nearly all the members of the imperial family congregated round Madame Lætitia (the mother of Napoleon I., known to history by the name of "Madame Mère").

His two cousins, sons of Queen Hortense, took a leading part in the rising of Romagna in 1831, and seriously compromised all the Bonaparte family, whose members were compelled to leave the Papal States.

King Jérôme then went to Florence, where he stayed until 1835, when he sent his son to Geneva to finish his studies.

Queen Catherine, the mother of Prince Jérôme, died in November 1835.

At the age of fourteen the young Prince was called to the court of his uncle, and entered the military school of Louisburg, where he remained four years.

The unsettled state of European politics in 1840 threatened serious complications. The King of Wurtemberg, who was very fond of his youthful nephew, seeing that he had completed his studies, and was about to leave Louisburg, offered him a commission in his army. Notwithstanding the advantageous proposals made to him, the Prince, who was then eighteen years of age, replied: "I cannot accept a position in which I might eventually be called upon to draw the sword against France."* Having taken leave of his royal uncle, he started on his travels through Germany, Austria, England, and Spain, where he studied the manners, the arts, and the politics of the various European nations. After having spent some time in thus collecting useful information, he obtained leave to reside in France, and he had been living in Paris for four

* Mirecourt's *Histoire Contemporaine.*

months when M. Guizot, then head of the Cabinet, cancelled the authorization and ordered the Prince to leave French territory under the pretext that he was conspiring with the men of the *National* * and of the *Réforme*,* and was connected with secret societies.

Towards the end of the year 1847, the ex-King Jérôme and his son again obtained permission to re-enter France, in compliance with a request they had addressed to King Louis Philippe. The latter even created the ex-King Marshal of France, and, as pointed out above, appointed him Governor of the "Invalides," and awarded him a life pension with reversion to the Prince.

A few months later the Revolution of February broke out.

On February 24, 1848, the day of the outbreak, Prince Napoleon went to the Hôtel de Ville, and, two days later, he wrote the following letter to the members of the provisional Government:—

"Citizens, while the people were achieving their victory, I went to the Hôtel de Ville. It is the

* The organs of the Opposition.

duty of all good citizens to support the provisional Government of the Republic, and I was anxious to be amongst the first to do so, and shall be only too happy if my patriotism can be of any service to the people's cause."*

The elections began in the March following, and the electors appointed as their representatives to the *Assemblée Constituante*, the former prisoner of Ham,† and Prince Napoleon. The latter had obtained, on May 4, 1848, 39,229 votes given him by the electors of Corsica, in reply to the manifesto addressed to them by him as the son of King Jérôme, in which he gave expression to the most patriotic and generous impulses.

In it, the Prince said:

"Having been brought up in persecution, and in the trials of exile, I have devoted my intellect and leisure to acquainting myself with and studying foreign countries, and have always sedulously applied myself to become worthy of France, which

* Castille's *Le Prince Napoléon.*

† Prince Louis Napoleon, afterwards Napoleon III.

has ever been so dear to me. Our late Revolution quashed the decree of banishment passed against my family and myself, and that is a recollection which will ever remain indelibly engraved in my heart."*

Prince Napoleon joined the ranks of the numerous but undecided party which assumed the name of Moderate Republicans, though it comprised in reality and in large numbers the partisans of the various Royalist factions, who only awaited a favourable opportunity for disclosing their pretensions. Democracy found in the Prince a convinced and ardent champion of all economical questions. He was one of the staunchest supporters of postal reform, of the reduction of the salt-tax, and of subventions to working men's associations.

As a member of the *Assemblée Nationale*, Prince Napoleon nobly and courageously took up the part of Poland and Italy; he, moreover, refused his vote to the Bill for the exile of the younger branch of the Bourbons.

* Castille's *Le Prince Napoléon.*

The counter Bill which he proposed on October 2, 1849, applied likewise to the persons who had been transported without trial. Indeed, the generosity of his nature was such—the history of his life bears witness to the fact—that he always embraced the cause of the oppressed, whether they were French, Poles, or Italians. His counter Bill, misunderstood by most people, was vehemently attacked. The Commission appointed to examine into it rejected it unanimously.

On May 13, 1849, the department of the Sarthe sent Prince Napoleon to the Legislative Assembly. In the space of a year the political outlook had been entirely modified. The Republicans only constituted an unimportant fraction of that new Assembly, the largest part of which was composed of the coalition of the partisans of the various monarchical parties. Each of the latter followed its own aim, under the cover of a deceptive and insincere cohesion, the result of which was a violent reaction against the principles solemnly proclaimed in the *Assemblée Nationale.* As for the Prince, his ideas and wishes were often contrary to the so-called interests of his family.

In order to escape from the embarrassing situation in which he found himself, and which became daily more and more intense, Prince Napoleon accepted the embassy at Madrid. But from the banks of the Manzanares his thoughts were ever travelling to those of the Seine, and the *democratic* Prince noticed with much regret the government of the Republic fatally carried away by the torrent of counter revolution.

Under those circumstances, he stayed but a very short time in Spain. The reason that contributed most to his sudden return to Paris was the proposal of the famous Educational Bill, known under the name of *Loi Falloux*, after the name of its promoter,* and the result of which would have been to plunge France again into the darkness of the Middle Ages. Prince Napoleon left his post and quite unexpectedly resumed his seat in the Chamber. He at once assumed a clear and well-defined attitude and took his seat on the benches of the Extreme

* Frédéric Alfred Pierre, Comte de Falloux, author of numerous Catholic pamphlets, and member of the *Académie Française*.

Left, whose views he shared on nearly all questions. He then became the target of his former supporters, who had become his irreconcilable adversaries. They nicknamed him *Prince de la Montagne*, a name which he did not repudiate.

After the restoration of the Empire, the first thought of the Emperor was to give satisfaction to the legitimate desire of the nation and to establish the mode of the dynastic succession. On account of the marriage of the Prince of Canino,* the laws of the first Empire had declared the issue of that Prince disqualified for succeeding to the throne, in the event of their being the sole direct descendants of Napoleon I. After conferring with his most eminent supporters, Napoleon III. decided that the branch of King Jérôme should alone be entitled to the imperial inheritance. That decision was the object of a *senatus-consultum* on December 23,

* Lucien Bonaparte, brother of Napoleon I., was created Prince of Canino by the Pope, and notwithstanding the opposition of the Emperor, married, in April 1804, Alexandrine de Bleschamp, one of the loveliest and wittiest women of the time, who some time before had obtained her divorce from a stock-broker of the name of Jouberthon.

1852. King Jérôme and his son and their descendants were alone declared "French princes" and "Princes of the blood imperial."

A short time after, Prince Napoleon was appointed general of division, and created grand cross of the "Legion of Honour." On February 25, 1855, he wrote to the Emperor an eloquent letter, in which he claimed the honour of joining the troops which were about to start in order to defend the honour and the rights of France.

The Emperor complied with his cousin's request, and entrusted him with the command of the third division of the Army of the East.

On his way to Toulon, where he was to embark for the East on board the *Roland*, Prince Napoleon met, on board the steamer plying between Valence and Avignon, His Excellency Vely Pasha, then quite a young man and ambassador of the Sublime Porte to France, M. Bixio, an ex-Cabinet Minister, and M. Emile de Girardin, the eminent journalist and writer.

In the course of conversation, the Prince urged the ambassador not to follow the same route on his return to Paris. He advised him to take a more

westerly direction, so as to visit an interesting portion of Southern France and the remains of the Roman occupation: Arles, Nimes, the *maison carrée* and the circuses.

After having made a scathing assertion with regard to the particulars furnished by the Prince to Vely Pasha, M. de Girardin ventured to defend the following thesis: *Seeing that the relics of the past are useless and antiquated, a railway station should be preferred to all the masterpieces of ancient architecture;* he further added that he only believed in the future, and rejected all the arguments brought forth in support of the traditions and teachings of history.

In a clear voice, and to close the discussion, the Prince pronounced the following words, which were much applauded:

"*My friend, you may say what you please, but when a man has broken one of his legs in the past, he walks lame in the future!*"

This anecdote is all the more reliable seeing that it is related by M. Bourgogne, former private secretary to the Prince, and the author of a defamatory pamphlet entitled: *Memoirs to prejudice*

the History of my Time (*Mémoires pour nuire à l'histoire de mon temps*).

In the Crimea, the third French division, under the command of Prince Napoleon, carried the Russian centre at the battle of Alma. Some time after, and though he was already ailing, the Prince requested General, afterwards Marshal Canrobert, to entrust him with the command of the storming columns which were about to be hurled against Sebastopol.

On the morning of November 5, the furious attack of the Russians on the plateau of Inkermann completely altered the plans of the besiegers. Prince Napoleon was ordered to despatch in haste his first brigade, commanded by General de Mouet, to Inkermann, and himself to rush at the head of his second brigade to the help of the English and to the defence of the French lines which were menaced. The gallant General de Lourmel lost his life in that affair. As soon as our troops had defeated the Russians, Prince Napoleon solicited the honour of storming the guns of Inkermann, and, without waiting for orders, he started off and arrived in time to join his division

and take a brilliant share in that terribly hard-fought battle. It was one of the batteries of his division, the battery *Lainsecq*,* which from the top of the banks of the Tchernaïa† stormed the Russians and heaped up their corpses in that ghastly valley.

In the official report addressed to the Emperor, by Marshal Saint-Arnaud,‡ on the battle of Alma, we notice the following passage :

"The troops crossed the Alma at a charge. Prince Napoleon, at the head of his division, obtained possession of the large village of Alma, notwithstanding the destructive fire of the Russian artillery. His Imperial Highness showed himself worthy, in every respect, of the illustrious name he bears."

Consumed by fever, Prince Napoleon was advised, and indeed compelled, by his medical advisers to leave the theatre of war and to embark

* After the name of the commanding officer.

† The river on the right bank of which Inkermann is situated.

‡ Armand Jacques Achille Leroy de Saint Arnaud, victor of the battles of Inkermann and Alma, was possessed of uncommon personal bravery.

for Constantinople, where he stayed a month; after which, the serious state of his health having been reported to the Emperor, the latter ordered him to return to France.

Calumny took advantage of the return of Prince Napoleon before the cessation of hostilities, and used it as a weapon against the name he bears.

Before the departure of the Prince for the East, the Emperor had appointed him President of the Imperial Commission for the Exhibition. On reaching Paris, Prince Napoleon found everything in utter confusion, but, owing to his wonderful power of organization, he soon brought everything to a satisfactory state.

On June 15, 1856, he embarked on board the *Reine-Hortense* in the company of scholars and artists, in search of a well-earned rest. His intention was to visit Scotland, Iceland, Greenland, and the polar seas.

That hard voyage of exploration began like a simple pleasure-trip. The imperial party visited Scotland, her historic ruins and her picturesque sites. Having called at Abbotsford, the Prince, forgetting the

grievous lines* penned by Sir Walter Scott against the Emperor, and recollecting only the admirable works of the great novelist, had the good taste to enter his name in the visitors' book.

Amidst many dangers, the voyage was continued to Greenland. The *Reine-Hortense* anchored not far from Gathaab, the chief factory of the country, and after a short stay on those icy shores, the party re-embarked and started on its return to Europe. On October 6, one hundred and thirteen days after its departure, the *Reine-Hortense* reached Hâvre. From that voyage Prince Napoleon brought with him a very curious collection relating to the fauna and flora of the countries he had visited, and respecting which he addressed a series of interesting papers to the Institute of France. Shortly afterwards, the Prince was elected a member of the Academy of Fine Arts.

He then retired to the private mansion which has

* It is well known that, in all Sir Walter Scott's works, where allusion is made to Napoleon, it is always in an antagonistic spirit.

become since so famous in the annals of art, and the recollection of which will remain intimately connected with his name. In conformity to his admiration for the classical beauties of the Greek school, he made up his mind to realise in the heart of Paris his ideal of a Greek dwelling, with its genuine architecture, its decorations, and its furniture; in short, his intention was, so to speak, to call ancient Greece to life again, and to live intimately in her midst. The Prince succeeded marvellously in carrying out his design, and his new residence became, for foreigners and for artists, one of the curiosities of Paris. Besides the refined luxury of that residence, and the priceless collection of ancient and modern specimens of art it contains, the Prince devoted the principal room to represent an *atrium*, adorned with the marble busts of his family. There the antique profiles of the Bonapartes mingle, to the eyes of the surprised visitors, illusion with reality, and might induce the belief that they are in the Rome of the Cæsars, whereas they are in the midst of the Cæsars of France. On the altar, formerly serving for the sacrifices to the tutelary Deity, the Emperor

Napoleon I. is seen standing, dressed in a toga, and holding a dagger. He appears as though sheltering, under the protection of his grand shadow, the images of his brothers and nephews.

In that delightful mansion, Prince Napoleon spent two years of his life, exclusively pursuing the culture of artistic and scientific studies, in close intercourse with a society of *élite*, foreign to political passions, and thoroughly indulging his taste for æsthetics and the research of truth.

The intimate friends of the Prince comprised members of the Institute, such as the eminent artists Ingres and Eugéne Delacroix, the learned archæologist Longpérier; literary men such as Alfred de Vigny, Ponsard,* Prosper Mérimée, Emile Augier, Villot; soldiers, statesmen, journalists, such as de Mouet, Marris, Cler, Bixio, La Guéronnière, Leplay, Emile de Girardin, and many others, all of whom brought into those meetings the independence of their minds and the freedom of their thoughts.

* The author of *Le Lion amoureux*.

In 1857 the Prince was entrusted by the Emperor with an important mission, which momentarily put a stop to the leisure of his private life. The question of Neufchâtel * divided Europe, and threatened to disturb its peace. The Emperor had determined to oblige Prussia to accept a compromise likely to preserve peace and prevent all complications. He had, however, failed in his negotiations. Under those circumstances, Prince Napoleon, supplied with instructions and a letter from his august cousin, started for Berlin. The decisive and prompt success of that mission is a matter of history which everybody knows. The able negotiator displayed sufficient talent and persuasion to obtain full satisfaction. What is less known, however, is the immense effect produced in North Germany by the appearance of the Prince. When calling at the various places visited formerly by his uncle, Prince Napoleon aroused the recollections of the past, and

* In 1848, Neufchâtel shook off the suzerainty of Prussia. In 1856, the Loyalist party, having tried a *coup d'état*, Prince Napoleon was sent by Napoleon III. to the King of Prussia, in order to come to some satisfactory arrangement.

imparted life and movement to the scenes illustrated by the burin. The effect produced on the masses by the envoy of Napoleon III. was somewhat magical; people rushed madly to see him, and were struck by a kind of religious astonishment when contemplating his historical features, and gave vent to their feelings by shouting unanimously: "*Vive l'Empereur!*" Truly, it was evident that those hurrahs came rom the soul, and were a sort of retrospective homage paid to the memory of the founder of the Napoleonic dynasty, and that those testimonials of respect were not marred by any bitter recollection. The feelings awakened by the presence of the Prince became still more apparent when he visited the tomb of the great Frederic. The royal sepulchre was lit up with dim lamps, which cast their obscure light on His Imperial Highness's features, to which they imparted the pale and dull appearance peculiar to the great Emperor's complexion. Filled with emotion, and wrapt in deep meditation, with his head bent, the Prince contemplated in respectful silence the last abode of the greatest of Prussia's rulers.

In relating this scene, an eye-witness says: "When seeing the French prince, it seemed to us that the very ghost of the first Napoleon had come to pay a personal homage to the real founder of the Prussian monarchy, and it was not easy to shake off the emotion, which caused perspiration to run from our foreheads, and brought tears to our eyes." Indeed, the success of the Prince surpassed the most sanguine expectations; he strictly carried out the instructions of his cousin, and, by their sympathetic acclamations, the populace welcomed the descendant of the great soldier who, but half a century before, had victoriously entered their capital. Prince Napoleon already possessed the reputation of being a gallant general, a distinguished artist and a savant; henceforth he was known to possess the best qualities of a diplomatist.

In the following year, Napoleon III. decided to appeal again to the eminent qualities of his cousin, and, on June 24, 1858, he entrusted Prince Napoleon with the portfolio of the Ministerial Department of Algeria and of the Colonies, which he held until March 1859. One of the first acts of the Prince was

to create in Algeria prefectures on the same plan as those of France ; he further instituted the Algerian general councils, which soon were in full working order at Algiers, Oran, and Constantine. A few days after his appointment to the Ministry, Prince Napoleon went to Limoges, in order to preside at the distribution of the awards granted by the Jury of the Haute-Vienne to the manufacturers of central France. So to speak, the Prince inaugurated his Ministry at Limoges by proclaiming the principles of political economy corresponding with his views. The speech he delivered on that occasion remains famous, and constitutes, in a manner, a real manifesto.

On January 30, 1859, Prince Napoleon was married to Princess Marie Clotilde of Savoy, daughter of Victor Emmanuel, then King of Sardinia and future King of Italy. That union sealed the alliance between the two sister countries, which were shortly to mix their blood for the deliverance of the one from foreign yoke and the acquisition of further glory to the other. Soon after this imperial wedding, war broke out between France and Austria. The war of Italy is a

matter of history, with the causes and the incidents of which everybody is acquainted. Prince Napoleon was sent to Tuscany as Commander-in-Chief of the Fifth Army Corps. He did not, however, take any active part in the campaign. Although he crossed the Apennines with a great deal of trouble and by dint of forced marches, he reached the theatre of hostilities too late to take a part in the struggle, which was brought to a close by the Treaty of Villafranca.

Prince Napoleon, although he was a senator by right (as Prince of the Blood), was very rarely seen in the Senate, and only delivered four speeches from the tribune of the Luxembourg Palace.

The first of those speeches was made shortly after the peace, on the subject of the temporal power of the Popes. It is said that Lord Byron only spoke twice in the House of Lords, but that his two speeches amply sufficed to establish firmly his reputation as an orator. Just as the indignant utterances of the great English poet disturbed the heroes of Britain slumbering in their graves in Westminster Abbey, so did the words that fell from the lips of

the Prince orator, shake off the torpor of the *patres conscripti* slumbering in their council chairs in the Luxembourg Palace. The effect produced by the Prince's speeches was immense. Disdaining accepted forms, empty and hollow sentences, the Prince dealt merciless blows at his opponents. His eloquence is natural, abrupt, unaffected, perhaps rather devoid of measure, and impetuous like all deep-seated and sincere passions.

Two of his speeches deal with the Roman question, another treats of Poland. In them, the Prince proceeds like a charge of cavalry, and goes straight to the object he has in view: the abolition of the temporal power of the Popes, and the resurrection of Poland as a nation.

Prince Napoleon felt he was in the right—and he really was—when, in reply to a Vendean marquess who had accepted a seat in the Imperial Senate, he related that, on his return from Elba, Napoleon I. had been received on his way with the cries of : "*À bas les émigrés ! à bas les traîtres !*"* That sentence

* "Down with the *émigrés !* down with traitors!"

aroused an outburst of indignation on the benches of the Luxembourg Palace. The senators, most of whom were deaf on account of their great age, had misunderstood the Prince, and fancied they heard: "*À bas les prêtres*!"* Notwithstanding the explanation courteously furnished by the Prince, the uproar continued during the best part of the sitting. There is scarcely any need to wonder at that, for the Prince's hearers were then his enemies of the past, the very adversaries he had fought against in the Legislative Assembly, and with whom no reconciliation was possible.

It is reported that the Emperor congratulated the Prince on his speech: if so, the praise must have been sincere, for the latter never indulged in flattery towards his cousin. The following manifesto, though short, is frank and precise, quite devoid of ambiguity, and bears witness to Prince Napoleon's sincerity:—

The Empire must doubtless maintain order at home, without which no government can exist, but it has also the duty of

* "Down with the priests!"

granting—and once granted, of respecting—serious and moderate liberties, foremost amongst which I would place the freedom of the press, one of the most useful liberties to a free State, the unlimited education of the masses, without any interference on the part of religious congregations, the removal of administrative obstacles, and the stamping out of the mediæval bigotry it is sought to impose upon us.

On all occasions, and thanks to the lucidity of his thoughts, Prince Napoleon expressed himself with similar clearness. Those who followed, as it were step by step, the various incidents of his political career, cannot conceive that anyone could have the slightest doubt regarding the sincerity of his language or the firmness of his convictions.

In a book entitled *Le Prince Napoléon et le parti bonapartiste*, M. George Lachaud, the son of the eminent French Counsel, draws the following portrait of the moral character of the Prince:

". . . The chief characteristic of the Prince is that, in all questions submitted to him, he always endeavoured to find out the truth, even when detrimental to his popularity at the time. When once he had discovered it, he would follow it up with the same energy that people display in

giving satisfaction to their ambition or to their hatred."

This is, indeed, the peculiar contrast presented by the character of the Prince ; a contrast, owing to which, whilst being one of the best known public men in Europe, he is also one respecting whom people form the most incorrect judgment.

For some, he is a sceptic treating everything with scornful doubt, wavering in his judgment, and indifferent to what occurs around him. Others regard him as an excitable, ardent and impulsive man.

The truth is that these different and seemingly opposed judgments are equally deserved by the Prince. He professes the most profound scepticism towards all that does not appear clear and evident to him; he scorns preconceived ideas and hasty judgments; he is indifferent to generally admitted rules; his ardour degenerates into passion with regard to what he considers just and legitimate, and he upholds truth with the same energy he displays in its research.

This is the secret of the unity of his political career and intellectual life. What he used to say

in the Republican assemblies of 1848, he repeated when first Prince of the Blood under the Empire; he again said it when he was in open war with the Bonapartist Party, and has never said anything else since that party has again placed all its hopes in him.

Between the sessions of the Senate, Prince Napoleon resumed his travels. In the company of his young wife, to whom he seems to have imparted his own tastes, he visited Algeria, Morocco, Spain, Portugal, the Azores, America, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Damascus, Baalbec,* and other places. His excursion to the United States gave food to the imagination of journalists who surmised that the Prince had gone to Washington as the bearer of political instructions from his cousin, seeing that war was furiously raging between North and South when the Princely party landed on American soil. Be it as it may, the illustrious visitor and his consort were received with the greatest distinction by President Lincoln at Washington, and by

* The Heliopolis of the ancient Greeks.

General MacClellan in the uproar of the camp. He received an equally graceful welcome at the hands of the Southern General, Beauregard.

He spent his time in visiting the various places of interest, in observing and studying the arts, manufactures, and manners of the people. Being simply a tourist, proprieties forbade him, both as a foreigner and on account of his exalted position, to express open wishes for the success of either North or South. At any rate, it is well known with what shrewdness of mind and perspicacity he foretold, on his return, whilst applauding it beforehand, the triumph of right and the abolition of slavery in the United States.

Independent of being a Prince, Napoleon's nephew is a man. In all the acts of his life, he seems to have taken for his motto Terence's famous maxim: *Homo sum, et nihil humani a me alienum puto.*

Indeed, all questions of interest for the future of mankind always found an ardent champion in him, whether political, scientific, artistic, or commercial. Towards the beginning of the year 1864, the Suez Canal Company found itself in difficulties raised

by England, who was then watching the progress of the undertaking with a jealous eye. A serious misunderstanding had arisen between the Company and the Khedivial Government, which latter questioned the very legality of the work, and compromised, at the same time, the interests of the shareholders, who were mostly Frenchmen. On February 11, 1864, at a banquet given in his honour, Prince Napoleon delivered a long *impromptu* speech, which was received with wild applause. Though he confined himself to the limits of familiar discussion, he delivered a masterly speech. It is worthy of remark that, even in the midst of the shafts he aimed at this country in the course of his speech, he found the means of expressing wishes in favour of liberty—so much does he worship it in his heart. "I cannot help it," he said, "but there is, on the other side of the Channel, a certain mirage which quite dazzles me. It is that of liberty, of which I am so very fond, and which possesses so much attraction for me."*

* Larousse. *Dictionnaire universel.*

In the following year (1865), a solemn occasion offered for the Prince to affirm still more explicitly, and at his own risk, his political views. The grave consequences which resulted for the Prince from his frankness, only serve to raise his character. A monument, erected at Ajaccio to the memory of Napoleon I. and of his brothers, was about to be unveiled. The Emperor being away at the time on a visit to Algeria, the Prince, foregoing momentarily his duties as member of the Privy Council, went to Ajaccio in order to preside at the ceremony. There, in the presence of an immense crowd, or, rather, in the presence of all Europe, he delivered a speech which became quite an event. In it, Prince Napoleon expressed himself thus:—

> I believe in the necessity of doing away with the temporal power of the Popes. . . . I love every form of liberty, but especially that of the masses. . . . True liberty means universal suffrage loyally applied, the complete freedom of the press subject to common law, and the liberty of meetings and discussions. . . . A free people ought to be composed of free, independent, and fully-developed individuals, instead of consisting, so to speak, of grains of sand whose cohesion is only due to administrative influences . . .

That speech brought a severe letter from the

Emperor to his cousin. The latter replied to it by retiring from the Privy Council, and by resigning his appointment of President of the International Exhibition of 1867. He, however, continued to discharge his duties as senator.

Prince Napoleon not only possesses the features of Napoleon I., he also has the penetrating genius and the impulsive nature of his uncle, and a similar contempt towards petty honours and petty things, which leads him to seek everywhere throughout the world what is grand and noble, and yet so seldom met with.

In an article on a portrait of the Prince, by Flandrin,* exhibited in the *Salon* of 1861, the late Edmond About wrote the following lines:

> The crowd has done prompt justice to the portrait of Prince Napoleon. As soon as the *Salon* was opened to the public, they gathered round the masterpiece like iron filings round a magnet. The reason of this is that the great qualities of M. Flandrin—rather veiled and not quite apparent in the majority of his works—assumed unusual vigour, and

* Hippolyte Flandrin, a famous French artist, some time Director of the French Academy of Painting in Rome.

became peculiarly brilliant at the contact of his illustrious model. . . . I do not mean to say that, on that occasion, M. Flandrin borrowed for once the palette of Rubens or of Delacroix.* Neither do I mean to convey that he forgot to bedaub, so to speak, with ashes some parts of his picture. But rather that the splendour of a great artistic work blinds critics themselves as to the errors and imperfections of details. Spectators, carried away by admiration, overlook the defects without noticing them, like a soldier who, rushing after victory, leaps almost unconsciously over the ditches that cross his way. . . . That portrait is not only splendidly drawn, it is a first-rate work. It is the study of a superior mind, and the result of a high intellect. Were all the documents of contemporary history to disappear, posterity would find in that picture all the constitutive elements of Prince Napoleon. Here he is that *César déclassé*, whom nature cast in the mould of Roman emperors, and whom fortune has condemned, until this day, to cross his arms in inactivity on the steps of a throne, proud of the name he bears and of the talents he displays, but smarting in his inmost heart under a visible wound, and nobly rebelling against a fatality which will doubtless not weigh on him for ever. An aristocrat by birth, he is a democrat by instinct. The legitimate son, and not the bastard, of the French Revolution, he is born for action, though doomed to aimless agitation and sterile impulses. Thirsting after glory, disdainful of vulgar popularity, heedless of what people may say or think of him, his heart is too noble to curry the favour of the mob or of the *bourgeoisie*, according to the old traditions of the Palais-Royal.† He it

* Eugéne Delacroix.

† A sarcastic allusion to the intrigues of the Dukes of Orleans against the elder branch of their family.

was who solicited the honour of leading the storming party at the siege of Sebastopol, and returned to Paris shrugging his shoulders at the dilatory measures of a siege—measures which seemed stupid to him. He it was who, out of curiosity, and to occupy his forced leisure and to gratify the aspirations of his active nature, quietly took a trip to the icy regions of the North Pole, where Sir John Franklin lost his life. He it was who undertook to govern Algeria with a vigorous hand . . . and who afterwards resigned, because he was not left sufficiently free in his movements. He it is who but yesterday, and on his first trial, won for himself the first place amongst our most famous orators, crushing papacy in like manner as a Sahel lion will, with his powerful claw, tear open his victim. M. Flandrin has left in the shade only one side of that noble and peculiar face: the delicate, artistic, and quite Florentine side by which the Prince resembles the Medicis. It was not, I believe, impossible to indicate with a few touches the grace of that powerful, delicate, and unsettled mind which surprises people, attracts them, makes them feel uneasy, wins their confidence without trying to do so, and secures their devotion without ever doing anything to bind them to himself.

As related above, a short time after the Treaty of Villafranca, Prince Napoleon delivered in the Senate a violent speech against the temporal power of the Popes and the intrigues of the Ultramontanes. That speech secured the unreserved approbation of the Emperor, but let loose against its author the fury of the Catholic clergy and of the French royalists.

On April 15, 1861, a pamphlet was published by the Duc d'Aumale, under the title of *Lettre sur l'histoire de France.* That pamphlet was intended as a reply to the Prince's speech. The Imperial authorities, being of opinion that it contained indirect attacks against the established Government, seized the pamphlet and began an action against its publishers and printers.

In the course of the speech for the prosecution, M. Ducreux, deputy *Procureur-impérial,** said—

In a recently published pamphlet the author did not confine himself to discussing with more or less severity or violence the political incidents and the acts of the Government. It bears evidence of deep and calculated hostility against the very essence of the Imperial Government. Its chief characteristic is an impassioned and bitter defamation of the Napoleonic dynasty and institutions. It is that pamphlet, gentlemen, which we bring under your justice. There were imperative reasons for prosecuting the writing and its author. The interpreters of the law, those who have the sacred duty of watching over it, could not allow it to be so gravely infringed and so audaciously violated, without making an example. . . . At first sight, Gentlemen, by reason of its epistolary form, on account of its sub-title: *Réponse à Son Altesse impériale le Prince Napoléon* (Reply to his Imperial Highness Prince Napoleon), that

* A magistrate discharging the duties of public prosecutor.

pamphlet might seem to be but a reply to the speech delivered by His Imperial Highness before the Senate. However, after careful perusal, everybody readily concluded that, under the appearance I have just pointed out, that pamphlet constitutes really the manifesto of a political party, and an attack against the Government itself. I must add that, in obedience to a feeling, the propriety of which everybody will appreciate, Prince Napoleon, in a letter published in the *Moniteur*,* appealed to public opinion to judge whether that pamphlet really is, as alleged, a reply to His Imperial Highness's speech. . . . As soon as Prince Napoleon heard that an action was brought against the publishers of that pamphlet, he at once wrote a letter requesting the Emperor to give orders to stop the prosecution. It was not possible to acquiesce in the Prince's wish, and to interfere with the course of justice.

On the very day of the trial, the *Siècle*† inserted in its columns the text of the letter written by the Prince to his cousin. It was couched in the following terms:—

SIRE,

A few weeks ago the Duc d'Aumale wrote a pamphlet in reply to the speech I delivered in the Senate.

Your magistrates saw in it an offence against the laws of the Empire and an attack against your Government, and acting in accordance with the rules of common law, they ordered the

* The Imperial official newspaper.

† An important Paris newspaper.

seizure of that publication and committed its publisher for trial.

In doing so, they strictly acted in accordance with their rights.

I had yesterday an interview with the Minister of the Interior in order to persuade him to decide, by means of a measure of exception, what in reality constitutes an exceptional case.

I am attacked in the writing of the Prince of Orleans. That is one more reason why I would submit to Your Majesty the necessity of obtaining the discontinuance of the prosecution.

To suppress a publication does not constitute a reply to the arguments contained in it. I therefore beseech Your Majesty to allow the free circulation of the Duc d'Aumale's pamphlet. I feel assured that the patriotism of France will judge that publication as it deserves to be judged, and that the common sense of the people will readily see through that so-called lesson in history, which is nothing else than an *Orleanist manifesto*.

NAPOLEON (JÉRÔME).

Notwithstanding the Prince's interference, the publisher of the incriminated pamphlet was prosecuted and convicted.

The action of France in Italy, as already pointed out, had aroused the passions of the clerical and monarchical parties. The struggle between the latter and the liberal supporters of the Imperial policy was fought at the tribune of the Senate. The contest

was carried on hotly on both sides. In February 1862, Prince Napoleon, who foresaw the dangers that would infallibly arise from giving way to the ever-growing claims of the clericals, had alone the courage to face the storm, and delivered a speech in the Senate in reply to the insinuations of his political adversaries. George Sand, whom the Emperor's cousin honoured with his intimacy,* wrote to him on February 25, 1862:—

> Yes, you alone, my dear Prince, are frank and courageous in that *factory* of hypocrisy which is called the Senate. Do not allow yourself to be frightened by all their clamour; march on, dear Prince, and rest assured that France is with you. She will feel grateful to you for the fury you arouse, and your place is already marked in the history of progress like a ray of truth piercing the darkness of ignorance. Our hearts are watching you, and mine blesses you.†

The next day the eminent novelist wrote again to her illustrious correspondent:—

> My Dear Prince,
>
> Thanks for the number of the *Moniteur* which you were good enough to send me. When writing to you last night, I

* Prince Napoleon even condescended to stand sponsor to Aurore, daughter of Maurice Sand, himself the son of the gifted authoress.

† *The Letters of George Sand*, vol. i. p. 321.

had only read curtailed extracts from your speech in the newspapers, and I now perceive that you spoke still better than I thought. Your speech is as fine as it is good, and, coming from your lips, the words it contains are bound to secure great and durable fame. You are inaugurating a great and new departure.

Will the *main object of the reign*, as people used to say in Louis Philippe's time, follow you therein? What a timid and cowardly reserve, what a puerile *moderantism*, are hidden under the oratorical talent of the Government speakers!

Everybody admires the prudence displayed by the Emperor; but, perhaps, he believes more of it to be necessary than is really required, and I notice with considerable anxiety the dreadful development of the clerical spirit. Napoleon III. does not know, he cannot know, to what extent the priests have everywhere extended their influence, and what hypocrisy too, has penetrated into all the classes of society caught in the meshes of the Papist propaganda. He, therefore, does not suspect that that ardent and tenacious faction is undermining the ground beneath him, and that the people no longer know what they ought to wish for and respect, when they hear their priests proclaiming aloud, and preaching in almost every village that the Church is the only temporal power of our days? Is it not high time to show that the priests can be braved and the game won? Believe me, the people are now convinced that the Emperor is the weaker, and does not dare to do anything against the men of olden times. You know the sad discouragement that creeps over the masses when they fancy they notice any weakness in the authorities, whoever they may be.

The Emperor has been afraid of Socialism—well and good; from his point of view he felt obliged to fear it; but, by striking it too hard and too hastily, he raised on the ruins of that party another party, much more skilful and much more

dreadful, a party united by the spirit of caste and *esprit de corps*, that of the *nobles* and the *priests*; and, unfortunately, I no longer see any counterpoise in the *bourgeoisie*.

With all its faults the latter, as a counterpoise, was useful.

Sceptical or Voltairian, it also possessed its *esprit de corps*, its vanity of upstart. It resisted the priests, it snubbed the nobles, of whom it was jealous. To-day it flatters them. The titles of the old nobility are acknowledged, the Legitimists are treated with regard, and even receive official appointments; you can judge whether they have been crushed! The *bourgeois* are therefore, anxious to be on good terms with the nobles, whose influence has been revived; the priests perform the duty of conciliators. People affect piety in order to gain admittance to the drawing-rooms of the Legitimists. The official world sets the example; smiles and greetings are exchanged at mass, and the wives of the *tiers* * become ardent Legitimists; for women never leave anything half done.

In the course of last year, all this has made enormous and alarming progress in the provinces. Priests make marriages, they secure dowries to husbands in exchange for their confessions. Secret and harmless societies have been prosecuted because their members did not agree. The *Société de St. Vincent de Paul* † is closely united, it acts like one man; it is the queen of secret societies. It has a footing everywhere, even in our schools; and the hisses of half the students who hissed About ‡ were not meant so much for the pretended friend of the

* An abbreviation of *tiers-état*.

† A religious confraternity.

‡ The late Edmond About, the gifted writer and author of *La Question Romaine*, containing sharp and witty attacks upon the temporal power of the Popes.

Emperor, as for the avowed enemy of Cardinal Antonelli. I *have good reasons* for what I tell you.

I believe there is yet time to remedy that situation, but next year it may be too late. France requires to believe in the strength of those who rule her. Thanks to that *prestige*, she is induced to accept the most unexpected events. When her rulers hesitate, when they pause, she at once exclaims that they are retracing their steps. She believes it, and they are lost.

It is rather odd that I, a Republican, should tell you all this, dear Prince; perhaps the men of my party, or at least, perhaps, some of them, think that, bad as things are, they are *all the better* for the furtherance of their own views. They make a mistake; they cannot restore the Republic, and are unconsciously approaching a *Restoration*. In the event of the latter, all will go back for a century; Italy will be lost, France lowered, and we shall all, once more, have to conform to the *sweet* treaties of 1815!

If that should ever be the case, I would rather, whatever little strength might still be left in me, go and live with your friends the Hurons, than inhale the incense of the sacristy.

Dear Prince, you are right, the Empire will be lost if Italy is abandoned; for the whole question of the future is in the success of Italian unity. You spoke sincerely, ably, and earnestly. May your words be heeded. You possess the true moral courage which always rises and confronts the storm; it is a glory of which I feel proud for your sake.*

GEORGE SAND.

* *The Letters of George Sand*, vol. ii. p. 321 and fol.

As already mentioned, Prince Napoleon undertook, on board the *Jérôme Napoléon*, a voyage round the world in the company of his youthful wife, and of Maurice Sand, the son of the great authoress, who, as seen in her letters, was on terms of intimacy with the Prince. That voyage lasted from June to October 1861.

Towards the close of the year 1861, Prince Napoleon undertook long and careful researches in the archives of the French Foreign Office, with a view to gathering, from official and authentic sources, the opinions expressed, for the last two centuries, by the most eminent French statesmen with regard to the temporal power of the Popes.

The first speech delivered by Prince Napoleon in the Senate, and aimed at the temporal power of the Popes, was followed on March 1, 1862, by a still more remarkable speech, based entirely upon the facts derived from the Foreign Office records.

M. E. Hubaine,* a distinguished writer, who,

* In his preface to *Le Gouvernement temporel des Papes.*

for some time, was private secretary to His Imperial Highness, says:—

It appears that all the Governments which ruled France from the seventeenth century down to the present time, were unanimous in denouncing the vices of the temporal rule of the Popes. The most illustrious statesmen of the old *régime*, those of the First Empire, who, nevertheless, re-established public worship in France, even those of the Restoration, who can hardly be taxed with irreligion, all declare that they are of opinion that the temporal power of Rome cannot last much longer, seeing that it is a disgrace and a perpetual danger for Catholicism.

On reading that speech, George Sand wrote the following letter to the illustrious orator:

Nohant, March 5th, 1862.

DEAR PRINCE,

You speak with great ability. I do not wonder at it myself, for I know that your eloquence proceeds from the heart. But how enraged are all those hypocrites (*cafards**) against you! Will they carry the day? Do they represent France in the eyes of the Emperor? You did well to protest beforehand against the hypocritical diplomacy of the ministerial mouthpiece. That leaves us some little hope.

In my heart, however, I am furious; you open to the *main object of the reign* (*pensée du règne*) a path which may save everything and even wipe out everything in history, but the Government seem to deliberately close their eyes!

* A term of contempt applied in France to the members of the Clerical party.

But I can assure you that the Empire is lost if it continues to slumber or to tremble, whilst the old monarchies are shaking off their torpor and the priests plotting. Salvation resides in you —in you alone. If France should prove as blind as her rulers, we shall have a dreadful repetition of the events of 1815, and the horrors that followed.

Are not all those old, devout, and bigoted generals bought beforehand?

Nevertheless, do go on, dear Prince; everybody is not ungrateful. The intelligent portion of the people is not yet corrupted. France cannot commit suicide. May God watch over us and always be with you!*

GEORGE SAND.

The *Débats*† says, with much reason, that you speak *as nobody else does*. I should think so. You alone say what you believe.

On July 18, 1862, Princess Clotilde was safely delivered of a Prince, who received the names of Jérôme Victor Frederic.

On that occasion, George Sand congratulated Prince Napoleon in the following terms:—

Nohant, July 26th, 1862.

MY DEAR PRINCE,

I have just returned from the banks of the Creuse, and learned the *happy event*. I need not tell you that I am delighted at it.

* *The Letters of George Sand*, vol. ii. p. 332.

† An influential French newspaper.

The Princess is a good mother to suckle her child! You must make a man, a real man, of the dear little one. You will, I am sure, be a kind father, because you have been a good son. See to the child's education *yourself*. It will then be trained as a man of the future, not as a man of the past. . . .*

On December 14, 1862, George Sand acknowledged in the following terms the receipt of a pamphlet sent her by her illustrious correspondent:—

Thanks, dear Prince, for the pamphlet you were good enough to send me. . . . All the documents it contains are quite sterling and useful. Let us hope that they will add their weight to the sum of reflections which the Government and the public ought to make a little shorter, whilst displaying less *indifference* towards the salvation of Italy and France.

Seeing the progress of clerical influence, I think France is more threatened than Italy. Is that tolerance a scheme of the Emperor for encouraging the formation of a Gallican Church at home, whilst the Roman Church is falling to pieces? Such a game would be clever, but rather dangerous. Priests, whether Gallican or not, can play a game as deep as anybody else, and I fail to see what French honour has to gain by victories of that kind. . . .†

With reference to the attitude observed by Prince

* *The Letters of George Sand*, vol. ii. p. 321.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 332-333.

Napoleon in the Senate, George Sand wrote him the following letter on March 22, 1863:—

My August Friend,

You alone are young and generous and brave! You alone love truth for its own sake. Amongst the men of genius of to-day, you are the only one whose genius proceeds from the heart, the only genius that is truly great and reliable. Dear noble heart! shining light in the midst of that seam of coal called the Senate—not coal, however, for it cannot be lighted—I esteem and love you always more and more. Ah! that Senate is a world of ice and darkness! It votes the destruction of peoples as the simplest and wisest thing; for its members themselves are moribund. Take pride in being disliked by such fellows. All those in France whose heart is still alive will be grateful to you. . . . *

In 1863 Prince Napoleon momentarily left the political arena, and retired to private life, devoting his energy, his leisure, and his vast intellect, to scientific and historic researches. After four years of voluntary seclusion, the re-opening of the Roman question, on the morrow of Mentana, compelled the Prince to leave his retreat and break silence.

On December 15, 1867, shortly after Mentana,†

* *The Letters of George Sand*, vol. ii. p. 334-335.

† Name of a battle fought November 3, 1867, in the village of Mentana, between the Franco-Papal troops and a handful of

Prince Napoleon then retired to his villa at Prangins, in Switzerland, and issued, in the form of a letter, a memoir relative to the affairs of Rome and the imperial policy. That memoir was couched in terms of a vehement and passionate eloquence. It was an open rupture with the policy of the Tuileries. The Prince addressed it to M. Sainte-Beuve,* who was supposed to communicate to the paper the *Siècle* that document which was destined to cause quite a sensation. Lengthy though it is, it will be read with interest on account of its great historical importance.

Prangins Villa, Switzerland, December 15, 1867.

My dear Monsieur Sainte-Beuve,

The Roman question is again being discussed in our Chambers. The debates it gave rise to have not been more brilliant than in past years. But the question itself has entered on a new phase, and provoked a declaration of unusual gravity, which leaves no longer room for ambiguity.

It has, I confess, surprised and grieved me. When the *Moniteur* reached my country retreat, I thought I was the

Garibaldians who, having exhausted their ammunition, surrendered to the French commander.

* See foot-note p. 326.

victim of a hallucination, of some nightmare, brought about by the cold breeze blowing on the snow and ice which surround me. But indeed it was a fact; I soon perceived it from the deep emotion which overcame me.

In its discussion, M. Thiers heaped up so many errors, M. Rouher so quickly forgot the most unimpeachable facts, that it became urgent for me to ponder over the matter, in order to classify so many confused ideas, to unravel so many distorted facts, and to bring into so grave a subject the notions of what is just and true.

The speech of the Emperor on the opening of the Chambers might have led people to believe that the Government was about to enter on a dilatory policy, oscillating between extremes, and alternately favourable to Papacy and to Italy, although the ominous act of the second expedition to Rome threw considerable obstacles in its way. But there was room to hope that, owing to his great abilities, the Emperor would not compromise the final result, and that, although he neither dared nor wished to bring about the fall of the temporal power of Popish Rome, he would not assume the heavy task of defending it alone, and would hit upon the means of quitting Rome, and substituting the responsibility of Europe for his own.

I have no inclination towards such undecided policy. I am unfit for it, and am of opinion that great aims can only be secured by great means. I dislike byeways; I follow the main road. I am, however, anxious not to compromise in the least the success of a cause in which I see the interest of France. I have no desire to leave the complete seclusion in which I have lived for the last four years; that is why I keep away from the Senate. My aim was to avoid the chance that my attacks—which, however moderate and respectful, could never have failed to be earnest—should disturb the unsettled

equilibrium of our policy, and provoke a reaction which there was every necessity to keep in check.

* * * * *

As regards the departure of the French troops, I am willing to make large concessions. I am willing to acknowledge that, according to the narrow text of the Treaty, apart from all verbal communications, putting aside the indirect intervention of France by means of the Antibes force, even disregarding the hostility of the Pope—flagrant towards Italy—and in the absence of all serious attempts at conciliation, the right of France to interfere could indeed be maintained. Doubtless that was not her duty, and her intervention could only have been brought about in defence of French interests. Those interests dictated to us, however, not again to set foot in that Roman wasp's nest, there to play the wretched part of the Austrians, and to accept the situation that was made for us, without any of the reservations which at least were imposed on us on the occasion of our first intervention.

Our interest was to give up Italy to the Italians. For all the diplomatic arguments, all the sophistry of this world, will not cause Rome not to be in Italy. They will not prevent its being the right of the Italians to watch what is going on in the centre of the peninsula. They will fail to maintain the present order of things. They cannot help the sovereignty of the Pope being for Italy a constant cause of trouble and agitation which must be removed. It is especially surprising to see Pius IX. forgetting his peaceful mission on earth, seeing that, in 1848, amidst the national outburst of his country, he declined to declare war against Austria; whereas he now recruits a foreign army to act against his own subjects, and sheds the blood of his Italian countrymen.

The long history of the Papacy is but a series of appeals to

foreign intervention, in order to impose on the people a bad and intolerable Government.

Popish history is summed up in these words: "*It harmed the country by means of foreign bayonets.*"

Although the idea of an European conference always raised such difficulties, that for my part, I never believed that it could be carried out, yet great diplomatic reserve was, above all things, called for in the face of the preliminary objections it aroused.

As we gather from his speeches, M. de Moustier* understood the question in that light. But to announce beforehand that *never*, and happen what might, would France cease to support the temporal power of the Popes, and that she would, on the contrary, maintain the integrity of the present territory occupied by the Papal States, was an unnecessary disclosure of our intentions, and rendered that temporal power a matter of sheer impossibility. The independent States of Europe are not children that may be summoned in conference in order to sign ready-made conventions. When, in obedience to the injunctions of M. Thiers and of M. Berryer,† M. Rouher subjected the Conference of Italy to the caprices of a majority led astray, he no doubt secured a Parliamentary victory, but he undoubtedly also sacrificed the interests of France.

A few words will suffice to refute the assertion of equal sympathy towards Italian unity and towards the temporal power of the Popes, as they both exist at present. Such sympathy is no more admissible than the idea of a Confederation.

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* French Minister of Foreign Affairs under the Second Empire.

† M. Thiers and M. Berryer were both members of the Opposition in the *Corps Législatif*.

It is beyond the power of the greatest nation to obtain contradictory results: Italian unity and Papal power are incompatible. They are irreconcilable, and to wish for the latter is to wish for contradictory results. We must make a choice. There exist but two policies; you will vainly try to discover a third. If past events have not sufficiently taught you that truth, the future—a near future—will inevitably prove it.

Under the emotion caused in me by the triumph of the Clerical party over French policy, I wonder what the future has in store for us. You and I have, in our respective spheres, endeavoured to secure the alliance of the Empire with liberty, with thoroughly constitutional institutions. That aim becomes now certainly more difficult to obtain.

There is a connection in all things, in France more so than anywhere else. The foreign policy of the country has a certain influence over its home policy. The defence of liberty abroad makes its triumph inevitable at home. The campaign in Italy brought about the Amnesty, the Decrees of November 24,* and the promises contained in the letter of January 19.† People may try to give up France to the Clericals; they will fail miserably in their endeavours. I do not fear the result, but I am afraid of the serious difficulties which may follow the attempt.

Under the impulse of fatal inspirations, the majority will distrust the country and show itself anti-liberal. We shall see that in the debates on the Bills relating to the Press and to public meetings. Though the right of holding public meetings is limited and full of restrictions in the Government Bill—

* Liberal decrees.

† In which the Imperial Government held out the prospect of a Liberal policy.

a Bill which I strenuously opposed—it will, I fear, be the second victim of the declarations of December 5.*

Indeed, the Clericals want for themselves the liberty of the Press, that of meeting—which they fully enjoy in their churches—and the right of uttering invectives from their pulpits. But they object to seeing their adversaries enjoying even the limited liberties they had been promised. The cause of progress is indivisible. If we oppose it beyond the Alps, we shall soon oppose it at home.

How can we leave Rome now? By summoning a conference? That is impossible. By inducing the Pope to make concessions? It is hopeless to think of that. By the surrender of Italian claims? We shall fail to secure that surrender, and I, personally, do not wish for it. As a permanent cause of agitation in Europe, our intervention will be as great a misfortune as that of the Austrians. After having done everything to expel those foreigners, we are on the eve of replacing them, and of making Rome a sort of Venetia.

We are opposed to temporal power, for the sake of French interests: the day of its downfall will be a greater day for the emancipation of France than for that of Italy. Should that deliverance come from Italy, it will constitute one more service to add to the long list of those that generous country has rendered to the cause of humanity. Like the martyrs of just causes, Italy has suffered much, and the world profited by her trials. It has been the cradle of art, science, literature, and political knowledge. My patriotism is, I confess, ashamed at the prospect of being indebted to her for that deliverance from the temporal power of the Popes. I always cherished the

* By which the Government surrendered to the Clerical party, as implicitly expressed in the speech from the Throne.

hope that the glory of having secured that reform—now indispensable—would have belonged to my country.

We must, however, not give way to exaggeration. When the hand of time marks the appointed hour, the majority of an Assembly cannot delay that hour. It may act as an obstacle, and retard the event whose hour has struck, but that is all.

We must not give way to despair. At the time of the debates relative to the Mexican affairs, did we not have a minority still smaller than that which blamed the second expedition to Rome? The majority voted all the credits, it approved and ratified everything, and yet it saw with satisfaction the close of an expedition which had so long secured its votes and support.

Serious foreign complications * may arise at any time. Should we persist in staying in Rome, we shall lose a devoted and useful ally, and, for the sake of the temporal power of the Pope, forfeit the advantages resulting from the war of 1859!

And yet that war was a noble and grand idea. It meant the tearing up of the Treaties of 1815, the result of our disasters.

To it we are indebted for Nice and Savoy—those French provinces so indispensable to the security of our frontiers. It constituted the first foundation-stone of a European reconstruction, to our advantage as well as to that of liberty.

Europe, whose bad organization in 1815 reposed on iniquitous principles, needed transformation. Events proved

* This passage is a proof of the remarkable political foresight of Prince Napoleon, so dreadfully justified by subsequent events.

the necessity of a change. We ought to have foreseen, promoted, and directed that transformation, indispensable to France, to the nations of Europe, and to peace. But that digression is out of place here, my object being to confine myself exclusively to the Roman question.

We have, at least, secured one step towards progress: the tracing of a clear line of demarcation between the friends and the foes of liberty. No equivocation is now possible. The Clerical Party, as the common enemy, should henceforth meet everywhere with convinced and resolute adversaries.

I have been struck by the remark of a speaker respecting the liberty of creeds: "The priest ought to be free and respected in the church, but deprived of all interference in the State. Such is the future satisfactory solution of the question."

My letter is very long. I have not, however, acquainted you with all the reflections suggested to me by recent events. Living in political isolation, deprived, as I am, of all influence over the destinies and policy of my country, I should easily console myself were I to witness the triumph of France and of our cause. The grievous prospects of the present ought not to make us despair of the future. Now, more than ever, must patriots seek for consolation and strength in their disinterestedness, in their convictions, and in their conscience, and not in the hope of a more or less remote victory.

Receive, my dear Monsieur Sainte-Beuve, the expression of all my friendly feelings.

Yours affectionately,

NAPOLÉON JÉRÔME.

That letter was acknowledged on January 5, 1868, by M. Sainte-Beuve in the following terms:

MONSEIGNEUR,

I find no suitable expression to thank you for having bestowed this *historic* honour on me; it is the crowning laurel of my short public career.*

Too weak at present to write myself, I beg leave to dictate, not only in order that the handwriting may be more legible, but in order to enable me to develop my thoughts.

Your eloquent protest seems to me perfect in every respect. Its logic is unassailable. All your arguments are closely connected. The contradictions you point out are fully exposed. A sort of inward warmth, only visible in certain passages, imparts life and movement to the whole.

I have but to beseech you, Monseigneur, to deign to modify two words, or rather one word which occurs twice at the distance of a few lines. It is the word "*indécise*," † applied to the Emperor's policy.

Your protest, Monseigneur, is the result of the first impulse; it is the result of indignant common sense, and a patriotic outburst. I will not say that there is art in it, although if there is, it is only in the passage wherein you show that the Minister ‡ went beyond, or misconstrued, the thought of the Emperor. The first rule, and, I will say it, the main skill, consists in avoiding applying an uncourteous (*désobligeante*) expression to the Emperor's policy.

Everybody knows sufficiently that the Emperor's policy is

* M. Sainte-Beuve had but recently been appointed a Senator.

† Hesitating. ‡ M. Rouher.

not yours, that it is neither to your taste nor suited to your character. It is enough for you to say so. But, instead of the word "*indécise*," which is a personal attack, and designates a system in discourteous terms, I humbly beg of you to accept or find a more *neutral* and indifferent expression, meaning the same thing, without causing people to grin at the beginning.

Your manifesto must be written so that, when reading it, the Emperor may say to M. Rouher: "My cousin is right." We are all aware that he said to his Minister: "You went very far to-day."

By means of that slight precaution, you will have conformed to all the rules of persuasion, and the shaft will enter with all the more force, with a view to divulging all the cowardice and all the follies.

I beg to apologise for my insistance, and lay at your feet, Monseigneur, the full homage of my admiration, of my gratitude, and of my devotion.*

SAINTE-BEUVE.

M. Sainte-Beuve wrote also to M. Havin, member of the *Corps Législatif*, and chief editor of the *Siècle*, the following letter enclosing Prince Napoleon's letter:—

Paris, January 9, 1868.

DEAR SIR AND DEPUTY,

I have received a letter of a nature to do me the greatest honour. But, after a first and second perusal, and putting aside my feelings of deep gratitude for the selection

* Sainte-Beuve's *Nouvelle Correspondance.*

of my name with regard to a communication of that kind, I feel that I am confronted by a document the scope of which quite outsteps the limits of my intellect.

That letter is not a secret. It is an eloquent outburst. It is not addressed to me alone; it is intended for thousands of minds worthy of reading it, and I do not think I am acting against the wishes of its illustrious signatory, in asking you whether you, my dear Sir, will not deem it advisable to afford to a historical document of that importance, the large *liberal* publicity which the *Siècle*, under your guidance, naturally enjoys. There are times when thoughts must be spoken, and when words must freely circulate.*

Believe, &c.,

SAINTE-BEUVE.

That letter was written, and its author was on the point of sending a clean copy of it to M. Havin, when he was informed that the Imperial Government objected to its publication.

On hearing that news, the eminent critic wrote as follows to his illustrious correspondent:—

Paris, 14 January 1868.

MONSEIGNEUR,

I thank your Imperial Highness for the mark of confidence you have deigned to accord me. I have "*my*"

* Sainte-Beuve *Nouvelle Correspondance.*

letter, I am entitled to call it thus. I have read it again. It will remain the historical monument of my humble archives.

I am but imperfectly acquainted with what occurred.* Yet the occasion will doubtless offer again for reproducing those noble and just thoughts; they cannot be lost. *Le Rhône ne se perd que pour se retrouver.*†

I beg you to accept, Monseigneur, the homage of my respect and gratitude.

SAINTE-BEUVE.

In 1870, on the morrow of the declaration of war, Prince Napoleon left his retreat, and reappeared in the political arena.

In a pamphlet ‡ published in August 1871, Prince Napoleon related the incidents connected with his journey to Sweden a few days' prior to the outbreak of the war, and with his official journey to Italy, with a view to inducing Victor Emmanuel and, indirectly, Austria, to embrace the cause of France.

* The refusal of M. Havin to insert the letter of H.I.H.

† "The Rhône disappears only to come in sight again"—which, indeed, is the case with this river below Saint-Genez, close to Bellegarde, where the Rhône flows round the foot of the Credo mountains and almost disappears beneath its argillaceous bed.

‡ *La Vérité à mes Calomniateurs*, by Prince Napoleon. Paris, 1871. Dentu.

In that historical document, the Prince expresses himself thus:—

As a reply to a public letter addressed by me to M. Jules Favre, Minister of Foreign Affairs, that Statesman pronounced the following words at the tribune of the National Assembly:

"Is it a fact that, of those who had the wretched hardihood to provoke the declaration of war, some amongst the most illustrious hastened to quit the territory, and fled before the enemy? I have the right to say that the attacks of such men cannot reach us, that we have the right of despising them, and that whoever wants to discuss the affairs of his country must, above all things, not possess in his past the recollection of being one of the generals who turned their backs upon the Prussians."

And he added further:

"I said just now, without naming the individual to whom I was alluding—and I believe the Assembly will be grateful to me for it—for I thought I had sufficiently pointed him out, that I did not intend to reply to the attacks directed against me by a person who wore the uniform of a French General, and who, nevertheless, fled at the very moment when the enemy was invading the country."

Someone interrupting the speaker here said: "Prince Napoleon!" *

At first I treated these attacks with scorn. After further consideration, I have come to the conclusion that I ought not

* Sitting of the National Assembly, June 17, 1871.

to be silent. We may keep silent in the face of general judgments and political appreciations, but we have a right to oppose a possible refutation to precise allegations. However great may be my dislike to doing so, I shall overcome it, from a sense of duty towards the name I bear and the cause I represent.

I could write scathing disclosures were I to imitate the rhetorician of September 4, in his personal recriminations. I shall not do it, out of respect for myself, because there are weapons of polemics that lower the man who makes use of them.

I charged M. Jules Favre with having usurped power, not, indeed, in order to save the country in danger, but with a view to gratifying his party hatred. I accused him of having sacrificed France to the Republic. I denounced him for having, by his incapacity, favoured the Prussians, and facilitated the successful outbreak of the Commune. I twitted him with having done all that, because of his hatred against the Empire, and because he was afraid of a direct and loyal appeal to the people.

Had M. Jules Favre been a serious politician, he would have endeavoured to reply. Being unable to exculpate himself, he tried, like the unscrupulous lawyer he is, to parry those accusations by attacking my honour.

I now reply to my defamer. I do so without phrases, simply limiting myself to quoting official facts and documents.

I have been accused—

(1.) Of having been the cause of the war;

(2.) Of having shunned the enemy.

These are the facts of my participation in the declaration of war:

In the month of June 1870, being anxious to undertake an instructive journey with a view to acquainting myself with

Europe—better, I thought, than in the midst of our sterile agitations and political struggles—I requested from the Emperor the necessary authorization. My cousin complied with my desire, and I set out on my journey, accompanied by a few friends, and without the least suspicion of the complications that were so soon to follow. The first news I had of them was conveyed to me by a telegram, received on July 8, at Bergen (Norway), and bearing these words:—

"Situation very strained on account of the Prusso-Spanish incident, although there is not as yet anything new. Seen, this morning, M. E. Ollivier,* who begs your Imperial Highness to keep within reach of a telegraph-office, and will wire in case of need."

On July 13, 1870, the following telegram reached me at Tromsö (Norway):—

"Complications avoided. The Prince of Prussia withdraws his candidature. Information will be given to the Chamber to-day. Will forward particulars."

On July 15, I received a fresh telegram, couched in these terms:—

"Yesterday evening and last night there have been manifestations in favour of war. The majority in the Chambers is

* M. Emile Ollivier, a member of the *Académie Française*, was the head of the Liberal Cabinet constituted on January 19, 1870. He attained an unenviable notoriety by uttering, on the eve of the declaration of war against Prussia, the following unfortunate expression, "We enter upon this war with a light heart."

also inclined to it, although it hesitates to resort to that extremity. The Ministry is undecided. There will be interpellations to-day. I shall wire. Warlike preparations are being actively carried on."

Finally, on the evening of July 15, on returning from visiting a camp of Laplanders, the following telegram was handed to me :—

"The Emperor requests you to return as quickly as possible. War inevitable. Reply at once by telegraph."

I started without delay, and arrived in Paris on the 21st of July. In order to gain time, I had left my steam yacht, and came by rail from the north of Scotland.

I thus started on my journey July 2. The first news of complications reached me on the 8th. On the 13th everything seemed settled. On the 15th, on the contrary, war was certain, and I received orders to return. The declaration of war took place July 19, and I returned to Paris July 21. These dates and these facts speak for themselves, and require no comments.

As regards my having avoided the enemy, owing to my mission to Italy, these are the strict facts of the case :—

The very moment that I returned I saw the Emperor, and requested him to let me play an active part in the war. The Emperor proposed to entrust me with the command of an expeditionary force, intended to act in Denmark, and to attack the northern coasts of Prussia. I readily accepted, and only expressed the desire that I might be seconded by able men, to be selected by public opinion, and whom I could trust. Two councils of war assembled, and made a careful preliminary

study of the question. On July 23 I submitted the following project of organization to His Majesty:—

"*Project for the Organization of an Expedition against the Coasts of Prussia, to be made by Naval and Land Forces combined.*

"PRINCE NAPOLEON, Commander-in-Chief of the French Naval and Land Forces, and eventually of the Danish Forces, should the state of international relations permit it.

"Concerning the naval and military operations, the Commander-in-Chief shall only receive his orders from the Emperor or from the General-Staff of the Army.

"Vice-Admiral de la Roncière le Nourry, Chief of the Staff to the French and Danish land forces.

"General Trochu, Commander-in-Chief of the French land forces.

"Vice-Admiral Bouët Villaumez, Commander of the Northern Squadron, placed under the orders of the General Commander-in-Chief, and corresponding solely with him."

The officers proposed by me accepted their commands, and the whole matter was settled, with their assent, in my study. Some difficulties having been raised by Admiral Rigault de Genouilly, Minister of Marine, the project submitted by me to the Emperor was brought to a standstill. That Minister declined to give up to me the supreme command of the fleet that was to co-operate with the land forces. Although the Emperor could legally entrust commands as he liked, and without previously taking the advice of his Ministers, he

conformed strictly to the Constitution, consulted with his Cabinet Council, and addressed me the following letter :—

"Palace of Saint-Cloud, July 25, 1870.

"My dear Cousin,

"We have examined your situation at the Cabinet Council. This is what has been decided.

"Prince Napoleon shall act as Commander-in-Chief of the expeditionary force, and of our allies, the troops of Denmark, provided the King agrees to it.

"The fleet shall remain independent under the orders of Admiral Bouët Villaumez, who shall have orders to arrange with the Prince regarding the share to be taken by the naval forces in the operations.

"In the meantime you may come with me. I contemplate starting Wednesday or Thursday.

"Trust in my friendship,

"Napoleon."

That decision taken by the Emperor in Council was calculated to modify considerably the elements of success of the expedition. It might have created discord in the command.

I was not guided by any personal preoccupation. My relations with Admiral Bouët were excellent. I, however, apprehended difficulties arising from that principle, that in war, a command, however inferior, is better than a command shared with others, and thereby undefined.

I had some ideas concerning the use of transports, gunboats, and flying batteries, in view of obtaining a combined action of the land and naval forces on the coasts of North Germany, which are very flat, and where the towns are situated very far inland. I placed very little reliance on the co-operation of the

naval fleet, properly speaking, composed of ironclads and vessels with a large draught of water. Those ships could not be of much use for the attack, and could only be employed to protect the convoys, the expeditionary corps on its transports, the gunboats, and the floating batteries. The Minister of Marine thought differently, and his strong representations to his colleagues caused the modification of my project.

The majority of the Ministers, and notably the *Minister of Finances*, acting upon the pressure of Admiral Rigault de Genouilly, voted against my proposals.

Time was pressing; the decision of the Emperor and of his Council was explicit. The only alternative left me was either to decline the command offered me, or to accept it in its mutilated form.

After a short hesitation on my part, and on that of the officers who were to accompany me, I accepted the command as modified by the Emperor. But foreseeing the delays in the execution, and the obstacles the preparations would meet with —chiefly after the Emperor's departure—having long been acquainted with the defects of our administration, I took the liberty of strongly insisting on starting with the Emperor. My intention was to leave the supervision of the preparations to General Trochu and to Vice-Admiral de la Roncière le Nourry, as nothing could have induced me to remain in Paris whilst the Emperor was at the front. In view of covering my responsibility, I addressed, on that very day (July 25), the following note to the Emperor:—

"*Note to His Majesty.*

"From the decisions the Emperor acquainted me with, it results:

"(1.) That Prince Napoleon starts with His Majesty;

"(2.) That Admiral Bouët has the chief command of all

the expeditionary squadron, and that he shall take his orders from Prince Napoleon;

"(3.) That the Prince is entrusted with the command of the French and Danish troops, as also with the diplomatic negotiations.

"The following points remain to be settled:—

"(1.) That relating to the conduct to be adopted towards Denmark;

"(2.) That having for its object the military negotiations;

"(3.) The appointment of the person entrusted with proceeding actively with the preparations in Paris, during the absence of the Emperor and of Prince Napoleon.

"It is indispensable to act with energy and activity, in order to overcome the obstacles of every kind arising from the simultaneous intervention of two Ministerial departments, in the absence of a chief empowered to decide the question.

"(4.) General Trochu has been communicated with. Like the Prince, he is of opinion that the good organization of the landing forces is an indispensable condition.

"Whilst accepting the Marines (9,000 men), they must form a division, and must be given a solid staff. A compact division of land forces is also needed, but it cannot be formed with the fourth battalions. The choice must lie between that of Paris and that of Soissons. In short, a third division would also be required. It should be composed, not of fourth battalions, but of ready-formed regiments taken from amongst those which are disposable in the South.

"If the Emperor agrees to what is proposed to him, it would be advisable to summon a Cabinet Council at once, in view of giving most positive orders to the two Ministers concerned, and to appoint the person entrusted with the organization of the whole affair, and on whom should be bestowed the widest

authority. That should naturally be done before the departure of the Emperor and of Prince Napoleon."

I did not confine myself to sending that memorandum to His Majesty, but, a couple of hours after, I wrote the following letter :—

"Palais Royal, July 25, 1870.

"SIRE,

"I thank you for having been good enough to authorise me to accompany your Majesty to the General Head-quarters, and to be with you as I requested. I shall be ready. I merely wish you to give official orders respecting the general officers who are to follow me, in order to regulate their position. I contemplate taking with me two aides-de-camp, two orderlies, and the military surgeon who has been attached to my person for many years.

"With regard to the projected expedition, men must, under the present circumstances, know how to sacrifice their personalities and their ambitions, in order to further ultimate success. Although I am well aware of the great difficulties connected with that expedition, as also of the weighty responsibility incumbent upon its leader, I readily and thankfully accepted its command in view of actively serving your Majesty and France. The ill-will of the Minister of Marine, and the hostility of some other members of the Cabinet, still increase the difficulties likely to arise for me from that command. Allow me, therefore, to beseech your Majesty to organize that expedition with homogeneity in its command, so as to secure its success. Unless such homogeneity does exist, the preparations will be slow and badly carried out, the expedition will fail in its object, and the French Navy will show itself as powerless in this war as it did in previous ones. It will acquire but little glory, and will fail to obtain any serious result.

"I take the liberty of expressing my opinion, not out of a spirit of criticism, but rather in order to meet the confidence your Majesty placed in me by offering me that command.

"Permit me to hope that the situation I am about to occupy with you will in no wise interfere with your freedom of action. I shall know how to confine myself to the most complete reserve.

"Accept, Sire, &c.,

"NAPOLÉON JÉRÔME."

I was the nominal commander of a contemplated expedition, but, in the meantime, I accompanied the Emperor. Such was my situation.

What I had foreseen came to pass. The preparations were slow, disasters occurred with such rapidity that, a few days after our arrival at the front, the expedition was countermanded, notwithstanding the efforts of General Trochu to bring the troops together, and those of Vice-Admiral de la Roncière le Nourry, who, in the meantime, called on the Emperor, and acquainted him with the difficulties he met with.

On July 28 I started for Metz with the Emperor, and my position was settled by the following order:—

"By order of the Emperor, His Imperial Highness Prince Napoleon, General of Division, is attached to the head-quarters of the Army of the Rhine, from July 28, 1870. The Prince takes his military establishment with him.

"The Acting Minister of War,

"GENERAL DEJEAN.

"Paris, August 2, 1870."

I do not recollect the events that took place between July 28 and August 19, although I closely followed all the incidents

connected with them. I simply confined myself to spending my time in gloomy silence with the Emperor. At Châlons, on the morning of August 19, His Majesty entered my tent, and said to me:

"The outlook is very bad. You are of no use to me here. There is only one chance for us, and that a poor one. It is that Italy should declare war against Prussia, and should endeavour to drag Austria into it. No one is better fitted than you to undertake that mission to your father-in-law and to Italy. You must start at once for Florence. Here is a letter which I have written to the King."

My first feeling was one of surprise. Seeing that it was my ardent wish to share to the last the fate of our soldiers, I at first declined. I took the liberty of pointing out that the immediate active co-operation of Italy seemed to me hardly probable, and still less so that of Austria. I further remarked that, seeing that I possessed no direct personal responsibility in the events that were going on, my wish was to remain at the seat of war with the Emperor. His Majesty insisted. He pointed out how useless I was to him since he had given up the chief command of the Army. He appealed to my devotion, saying that it was neither my duty to myself, nor my right towards him and the country, to decline such a service. He further added:

"Besides, you will only leave me for a few days. If your mission should fail, you shall come back to me. MacMahon has settled his plan. The Army will retreat on Paris, by way of the North. We shall probably fight the decisive battle in the neighbourhood of Paris, and by that time you will have returned."

Despite my deep respect towards the Emperor, I pointed out to him that, seeing he was no longer invested with the supreme command, my military chief was Marshal MacMahon, to whom

I should apply for orders. To that the Emperor replied: "As to that, you shall get them."

These are the orders I received:—

"H.I.H. Prince Napoleon, being entrusted by the Emperor with a mission to Italy, all the authorities are instructed to give him whatever help and assistance he may require.

"Given at our Imperial head-quarters at the Camp of Châlons, August 19, 1870.

"NAPOLEON."

"H.I.H. Prince Napoleon is entrusted by the Emperor with a special mission.

"All the military and civil authorities are called upon to afford him every facility for discharging it, and to place at his disposal every available means he may require for that object.

"At our head-quarters, Camp of Châlons, August 19, 1870.

"The Marshal Commander-in-Chief,

"MARSHAL DE MACMAHON."

As my only object is to lay bare my personal conduct, I shall not disclose the orders and the instructions the Emperor gave me for the King of Italy. Everybody will understand my reserve in that respect.

I set out on my journey August 19 at midday. Having orders not to go to Paris, I passed through Lagny and Meaux. I must state that my departure took place because of the Emperor's belief that the Army was falling back upon Paris, where I was to meet His Majesty. I must further point out that I only started in compliance with the formal orders of Napoleon III., my Sovereign, and of Marshal de MacMahon, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army.

On August 21, I arrived in Florence at my father-in-law's,

King Victor Emmanuel. I again repeat that I cannot furnish any explanations respecting the various phases of my mission, its difficulties, and the delays it met with. It was, indeed, no easy matter to induce Italy to declare war in twenty-four hours, against victorious Prussia. The success of the negotiations did not depend so much on Florence as on Vienna.

The following despatch from Baron de Malaret, French Minister at Florence, is a reply to the insinuation often made, and implying that the Cabinet of Paris was unacquainted with my instructions, and blamed my mission. This is indeed what the French Minister wrote to me on August 21 :—

"MONSEIGNEUR,

"In compliance with the desire you expressed this morning, I requested our Minister of Foreign Affairs to enable me to acquaint your Imperial Highness with the political and military situation. On returning from a visit, I found the following telegram, from Prince de la Tour d'Auvergne, waiting for me at the Embassy :—

"'Tell Prince Napoleon that the military situation is rather serious. We are still without news from Marshal Bazaine.'

"Please to accept, &c.,

"MALARET."

Whilst trying to induce Italy and, indirectly, Austria to join us, I was anxious to be informed not only of the general situation of the Army, but especially that of Paris. The confidence placed in General Trochu, by all under his orders, as Military Governor of the capital, is well known. That prompted me to send him the following note :—

"I have been sent here by the Emperor and by Marshal MacMahon in order to induce Italy and Austria to go to war. . . . It is my opinion that Italy might furnish 50,000 men in a

week, and could raise that force to 100,000 in a fortnight, and to 150,000 in a month. I have no precise news, and apply for information to you who possess my friendship and confidence. Tell me what is our military situation, and give me your advice as to where the Italian troops should be sent, in case I obtained them. Should they be sent by way of Mont Cenis to Belfort, or by the Alps through Munich. In the latter case, we should have to obtain the consent of Austria, seeing that her territory would have to be crossed. . . . I am anxiously waiting your reply. Pray do not disclose this note.

"NAPOLÉON JÉRÔME."

On August 25, General Trochu wired to me as follows:—

"The news is better. Marshals MacMahon and Bazaine have secured their junction, and the latter is now supplied with fresh provisions and ammunition. There reigns, however, the greatest uncertainty concerning the military movements and operations. Everything is kept secret.

"The Italian troops should be concentrated on Lyons. They should thence, by a perpendicular march,* threaten the left flank of the enemy, in the direction of Belfort or Langres.

"German scouts have been seen at Châlons and Troyes.

"The works connected with the defence of Paris are progressing satisfactorily.

"Believe in my respectful attachment.

"GENERAL TROCHU."

From the numerous despatches which I received I learned, on August 27, that the Emperor and the army were marching on Chesne-Populeux, thereby departing from the road to Paris. I, therefore, made up my mind to leave Florence and join the

* *Marche perpendiculaire.*

army. Whilst abstaining from disclosing the particulars of my negotiations—which I have no right to disclose—I transcribe here the following telegram, which only refers to my personal position and proves my anxiety to start for the front:—

"*To His Majesty the Emperor, at the Imperial Quarters.*

"Florence, August 27, 1870.

"I fear I cannot induce Italy to declare war before fresh events have happened. In pursuance with your orders, I decline all discussion relative to diplomatic intervention on the part of the Cabinet of Florence.

"I am still without reply to the two last despatches I addressed to your Majesty.

"I have been informed from Paris that my mission is being denounced, that it will give rise to an *interpellation* in the Chamber, and that the Ministry will scarcely defend me. Under those circumstances, please to give me positive orders: I think they can only be one of the following:—

"1st. To stay here and follow up the negotiations, which I now have no longer any inclination to do.

"2nd. To join you, in which case it will be difficult for me not to cross Paris.

"3rd. To return me my freedom of action, if you think I can be of no service to you.

"I am waiting your orders and pray you will express them clearly. "NAPOLEON (JEROME)."

This was the Emperor's reply:—

"*To Prince Napoleon, at Florence.*

"Chesne, August 27, 1870.

"Your telegrams to hand. Nothing new here. Pray stay where you are in order to follow up negotiations. I shall send orders to Paris to take up your defence if attacked.

"NAPOLEON."

From August 28 to August 30 my time was spent in deadly anxiety, hesitating between the alternative of leaving Florence in opposition to the wishes of the Emperor, or of prolonging my stay there in accordance with his orders. In the meantime, further telegrams informed me that the army had taken up its positions, that an action was hourly expected, and that, should I start, I should arrive too late to take a part in the battle.

In the extreme perplexity in which I was then, the conduct I followed was dictated by the conviction that, chiefly in difficult circumstances, strict obedience to duty and discipline, without any regard for private considerations, is the only line of conduct a man of honour ought to follow. Being afraid of crossing the intentions of the Emperor by leaving Italy, at a time when that Power might be called upon to play a paramount part in our favour, in case the fate of arms were not fatal to us, or, at least, not decisive, I made up my mind to conform to the orders given me.

On August 30 and 31, and September 1, every hour brought me the news of a fresh disaster. The information came to me from Belgium almost as quickly as it was known at head-quarters.

Then came Sedan, followed up by the usurpation of the so-called Government of the National Defence.

As soon as the catastrophe became known to me, I left Italy for Switzerland, and, before starting, I wrote the following letter to the Emperor:—

"*To His Majesty the Emperor of the French.*

"Florence, September 4, 1870.

"SIRE,

"I have just heard of our lost battles and of your capture.

"My duty and devotion towards your person dictate my

conduct. I beg to be authorized to join you, chiefly now that, seeing what has happened in Paris, it is hopeless for me to try and take part in the defence of the country.

"Whatever may be the conditions imposed on me, I readily submit to them beforehand, in order to be with you. Misfortune can still only make tighter the bonds which have united me to you from my childhood. I beg your Majesty to acquiesce in the request I address to the King of Prussia.

"Please to accept, Sire, the homage of the deep and respectful attachment with which I am,

"Your Majesty's most devoted Cousin,

"NAPOLEON (JEROME)."

The Emperor made the following reply:—

"*To Prince Napoleon.*

"Wilhelmshöhe, September 17, 1870.

"MY DEAR COUSIN,

"I am deeply moved by the offer you make of sharing my captivity, but it is my wish to remain here alone with the few persons who followed me. I even requested the Empress not to come here.

"I trust we shall meet again in better days. In the meantime, I again give you the assurance of my sincere friendship towards you.

"NAPOLEON."

Everything was over.

After the triumph of the enemy, the allies of the Prussians at home overthrew our dynasty under the fallacious pretext of the better defending themselves. The population, maddened with despair and illusion, allowed itself to fall a prey to an odious

gang of ambitious intriguers, who presented the dreadful spectacle of anarchy at home in presence of the invading foreigner.

All the resources still possessed by France were squandered. Our resistance, which the heroism of a few soldiers and generals failed to render efficacious, had no other result than to spread ruin and devastation and to make the fall of our nation still more disastrous. Our unfortunate country then offered an instance of the degree of degradation a great people may come to, when, in the face of the enemy, its leaders only display incapacity, envy, and covetousness, and let loose rancour, hatred and all kindred bad feelings.

However decisive those explanations may be, I should have some doubts as to the way in which they would be received, if they were addressed to an assembly which glories in being composed of our enemies, and before which a tirade against the Emperor or his family is the surest means of securing the favour of the partisans of the white flag and of the adepts of the red one. But I appeal to all my fellow citizens, to that loyal and generous people who did not long forgive those who forsook the leaders of his choice, who always branded traitors, and whose wishes its present rulers dare not consult loyally by means of a plebiscite, because they are fully aware that parliamentary intrigues, calumnies and factitious combinations would again prove powerless, as they did on the occasion of former appeals to the people in 1800, 1804, 1815, 1848, 1851, 1870.

I appeal to that people, who may be led astray and carried away some day, but which shall rise again, and, after considering the senile divagations by which it allowed itself to be ruled, shall again find in its heart the only name of our century which, in spite of the faults and of the misfortunes of those who bear it, constitutes both a principle of authority and a democratic guarantee.

I am confidently awaiting the decision of that people.

After the Revolution of September 4, Prince Napoleon retired to his Swiss villa at Prangins, and again devoted his leisure to study, only leaving his retreat with his two sons * to pay short visits to his wife at the castle of Moncalieri.

In 1871, Prince Napoleon was elected Councillor-general by the electors of Ajaccio against M. Rouher.

On September 26, 1873, at a time when the idea of a monarchical restoration was being seriously mooted, the *Avenir national* † published in its columns the text of a letter addressed to the Prince by some Bonapartist and Moderate Republican deputies. That address contained the following important passages:

> At this moment—which will, perhaps, decide for the future—it is the duty of every man, of every citizen, to side for or against the Revolution. Far from exonerating you from that duty, the name you bear makes it all the more imperative on you. You are the representative, if not of an idea, at least of a tradition which, notwithstanding painful recollections and

* Napoléon Victor Jérôme Frédéric, born July 18, 1862; and Napoléon Louis Joseph Jérôme, born July 16, 1864. Prince Napoleon has also a daughter, Marie Lætitia Eugénie Catherine Adélaïde, born December 20, 1866.

† A Paris newspaper.

cruel disasters, still preserves a considerable amount of influence in the country. Public opinion may even be said to be divided between that tradition and republican hopes. Being aware of that, being fully convinced that an appeal to national sovereignty could only result in a choice between democracy in a dictatorial form and the democratic *régime* of self-government, the monarchical coalition declines to consult the wishes of the country.

To call upon you to sign a compact bringing together in a homogeneous and formidable league, a vast democratic and *national party*, all the forces of public opinion, it requires a mental courage which you perhaps do not suspect, but which you will appreciate when you shall take the patriotic resolution of holding out your hand to adversaries, reconciled by a common object—the safety of the Republic—to M. Thiers and to M. Gambetta, saying to them: "Gentlemen, the France of 1789 is threatened. Let us unite in view of defending the rights of France and the flag of 1789!" We appeal to your past itself, we flatter ourselves that, on the eve of the ominous event about to be consummated, you will know how to subordinate dynastic considerations to the superior interest of the country. We beg you to append to the proposed compact between the partisans of public order and national sovereignty—safeguard of the conquests of the Revolution in the present and of public peace in the future—the signature of a Napoleon. That signature will be respected because it recalls, with the glorious legend of Marengo, the victorious campaign of Italy.

* * * * *

May the genius of the Revolution and the love of the country inspire you, Prince, and you shall share in history, with those who propose that compact and those who shall accept it, the honour of having—at a time when the Restoration of a *régime* condemned by the conscience of the public was being con-

templated and prepared—saved the sovereignty of the nation and protected the liberties of the people.

That address met with the following reply from Prince Napoleon, who then occasionally resided in Paris :

Paris, September, 26, 1873.

GENTLEMEN,

The frankness and unexpectedness of your action compel me to give it a concise reply, dictated by the opinions I have professed all my life.

Seeing the gravity of the steps implied by the publication of your letter, I must not keep silent.

In the ominous times we are passing through, it is the duty of every citizen not to imitate the neutrals of antiquity, and leave the imperilled city. As for me, I am not a neutral, and shall not desert my post during the struggle.

I can only speak in my own name, although I can scarcely expect to meet with the disapproval of those whose hearts vibrate at the name of Napoleon.

The alliance of the popular democracy and of the Napoleons has been the object of all the acts of my political life. Let us hold up our flag in spite of the threats of the white flag foreign to our modern France, and which the Pretender could only surrender as a compromise and a sacrifice to the cleverest of his supporters. At all events, how much would that tardy concession be worth? The reign of the Bourbons could only be the triumph of a reactionary, clerical and anti-popular policy. The flag of the Revolution has alone, for a century, been waving over the genius, the glory and the misfortunes of France. It alone must guide us towards a truly democratic future.

Many amongst the partisans of the sovereignty of the people differ as to the means of applying it. At the present moment, a common understanding concerning the very principle of that sovereignty, is necessary and patriotic. As citizens of modern society, we must all endeavour to found true liberty by means of universal suffrage—a liberty based upon reforms which are the essential condition of France's safety.

Indeed, we must forget dissensions, attacks, struggles, our mutual sufferings, and even insults and calumny, in order to assert the principle of national sovereignty, apart from which there can only be danger, discord and fresh disasters. Let us be united in order to baffle wicked attempts, and thus form the Holy Alliance of patriots.

NAPOLEON (JÉRÔME).

In 1876, Prince Napoleon was elected to a seat in the National Assembly by the electors of Corsica. In that capacity, he took his seat on the benches of the Left, and, after the dissolution of the Chambers, the peremptory dismissal of the Jules Simon * Cabinet, and the failure of the *coup d'état* attempted by Marshal MacMahon, the Prince joined the Republican majority of the Chamber, known to history as the

* Jules François Simon Suisse, better known under the assumed name of Jules Simon, a distinguished French philosopher, writer and statesman. He is a life Senator and a member of the Académie Française, and has powerfully contributed to the spread of public education in France.

363 deputies, who, headed by Gambetta, organized the resistance which ended in the triumph of the moderate Republicans.

In 1878, after the death of King Victor Emmanuel, Prince Napoleon wrote a pamphlet entitled *Les Alliances de l'Empire en* 1869 *et en* 1870. The object of the illustrious author is to show that the clerical party and the temporal power of the Popes are the real causes of the disasters that befell France and the Empire in 1870. The conclusions he draws from that remarkable essay are well worth quoting:

It is, by no means [says the Prince], my intention to state that the alliances we might have concluded would have prevented all the faults we committed, especially our military faults. It is, however, quite obvious that, had we been allied to Austria and Italy, we should have had many chances in our favour. At any rate, such alliances would have palliated the consequences of our defeats.

Two separate negotiations were carried on in view of those alliances: that of 1868-69 failed because of the explicit refusal by France to come to an understanding with Italy concerning the settlement of the Roman question. At that time the influence of the clerical party alone prevented the signature of a treaty, the provisions of which had been agreed upon and were quite arranged between France, Austria and Italy. They who, like myself, were acquainted with those

negotiations, are in a position to point out the real share each power and party had in them.

As for the second negotiations—those of 1870—they were entered upon too late, and too much confidence was placed in the bearing of the letters exchanged between the sovereigns. Although those negotiations failed to secure their object, it cannot be denied that there were still serious differences between the conditions agreed upon by Austria and Italy, and those conceded by France until August 20, the date of my mission. As for the latter, the rapidity of our defeats was alone the cause of its failure.

Great teachings are to be gathered from those events, Indeed, the latter point out that the clerical party was powerful enough to rule Napoleon III. and his Cabinet, the leading members of which were far from belonging to the clerical party, when the war broke out. Notwithstanding the efforts of the Emperor and of his advisers to the contrary, that party succeeded in directing French policy. How different is the example of Cardinal Richelieu forming an alliance with German Protestants at the very time when he was besieging the French Protestants shut up in La Rochelle! Are we to conclude that, in the sixteenth century, Catholic politicians loved their country better than the politicians of to-day, and that its greatness and triumph were then preferred to blind party spirit? The clerical party should at least have the courage of its own opinions. Instead of feeling hurt, when twitted with having placed the temporal power above the allies France could have secured, that party ought to glory in it. To be consistent, it ought to say: "The Pope before everything, even before country."

That policy imposed upon Napoleon III. by the clericals, is the chief cause of all our disasters, and impartial history will say, that the support of the temporal power of the Popes cost France Alsace and part of Lorraine.

By the sad death of the Prince Imperial,* on June 1, 1879, Prince Napoleon became the head of the Bonaparte family, and, notwithstanding fruitless attempts to provoke disagreement between the Prince and his eldest son Prince Victor, Prince Napoleon is regarded by the bulk of the Bonapartists as the lawful heir of the imperial traditions.

On January 15, 1883, shortly after the death of Gambetta,† Prince Napoleon issued the following manifesto:

To my Fellow Countrymen.

France is sinking.

Some amongst those who suffer are agitating. The great majority of the nation is tired. Distrusting the present, it seems to be eagerly looking forward to a future which could only be secured by manly resolution.

The Executive is weakened, incapable, and powerless.

The Chambers lack will and direction.

The party in power disowns its very principles, and only seeks to gratify its least noble passions.

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* Eugéne Louis Jean Joseph Napoleon, born at the Tuileries March 16, 1856, only son of the late Emperor Napoleon III., became head of the Bonaparte family on the death of the latter, January 9, 1873.

† Léon Gambetta met with a tragical death, December 31, 1882.

Parliament is divided between numberless factions.

Reactionaries, Moderates, and Radicals, all in turn obtained the direction of affairs. They all failed to bring order and prosperity to the country.

You have been promised a Government that would heal our wounds and give us all needed reforms. Those were, alas! but fallacious prospects.

You are constantly witnessing fresh crises resulting in frequent changes of the head of the State, of Ministers, and in the composition of the Chambers.

For the last twelve years you have had the opportunity of appreciating the advantages of a Parliamentary Republic. The experiment ought to be full of instruction.

You have no Government.

The cause of all the evil is in the Constitution which places the country at the discretion of eight hundred senators and deputies.

Faults were committed in the past. Why not have tried to derive teachings from them instead of aggravating them?

The direction of our army, the basis of our greatness and security, has fallen a prey to the conceited ignorance of incompetent men. For the last ten years they have been discussing the question of its reorganization, and, after fruitless attempts which discredit and ruin the military spirit, they are still in quest of a good recruiting law.

The public service has fallen into utter discredit. Public officials are the servants of the meanest electoral interests.

The magistracy, menaced in the very essence of its independence, seems to be daily losing the security it is entitled to, and the sentiment of its duties.

Our finances are in utter confusion.

The taxes, heavy and badly assessed, are kept up by a fatal spirit of routine which prevents all progress.

It is, indeed, easier to issue loans than to apply reforms.

Our expenditure increases unreasonably.

The most elementary questions connected with the management of public funds seem quite unknown to our financiers. All classes of society are indulging in shameful speculations, which only escape with impunity on account of compromising complicity on the part of those who are entrusted with watching over public morality.

Our floating debt has reached a figure which may threaten our credit at the first catastrophe.

Notwithstanding enormous taxes no balance exists in our budget.

Religion is left defenceless to the mercy of persecuting Atheism. And yet that great interest of all civilised societies would be more easily protected than any other by the loyal application of the *Concordat*, which alone can give us religious peace.

No attention is paid to social problems, vital though they be for our democracy, in which political equality should result in a more equitable re-partition of charges for the benefit of the most numerous and poorest class. Their existence is denied and their study despised. Instead of progressing, we are going back with regard to those important questions.

The denunciation of the treaties of 1860—which brought us prosperity—has dealt a blow to our commerce, and sacrificed the interests of both consumers and tradespeople.

Our foreign policy displays bad faith towards the weak. In Tunis—the costly occupation of which met with no compensation—it only serves private speculations. In Egypt—where France possesses considerable interests—our policy has been timorous and stupid.

We cannot travel abroad without experiencing feelings of shame and sadness. Our France, formerly so great, has lost

her friends and her prestige. Those amongst foreigners who are best disposed towards us, only display an indifference more grievous still than open hostility. A strong and powerful France is, however, necessary for the peace of the world.

Our recovery at home will restore to us the position we formerly occupied abroad.

Our present situation arises from our having given up the principle of national sovereignty. France cannot recover unless the people speaks.

The heir of Napoleon I. and of Napoleon III., I am the only living man whose name obtained *seven millions three hundred thousand* votes.

Since the death of the Emperor's son, I kept silent concerning our general politics. Unwilling to disturb the experiment that was being made, I waited in grief until such time as events should allow me to speak. My silence was but the patriotic expression of my respect for the country.

My conduct, opinions, and sentiments have been systematically defamed. Impassible scorn was my only reply to those who tried to excite the sons against their father. That was, indeed, a hopeless though hateful attempt. I had to enforce silence on young hearts indignant at the idea of those incitations. Alone, I wanted to face my adversaries. My sons are still unacquainted with politics. The natural order of things points them out to come after me. They will remain faithful to the true Napoleonic traditions.

The word abdication has been mentioned. No such thing will, however, happen. When the duties are superior to the rights, an abdication is a desertion.

Such mutual compromises may suit Princes who regard themselves as possessed of rights superior to the will of the country. The Napoleons, elects and servants of the people, could not act thus.

The world is divided between two principles: that which admits of a right superior to the will of the people, and that which considers the popular sovereignty as the essence of all authority.

I respect the country where those two principles agree and work together. In France it is different. Our country has positively disowned the representatives of the past.

There must be no misunderstanding, no equivocation.

No agreement is possible with the supporters of the white flag, which has become the sole emblem of the House of Bourbon.

Though some dissidence may exist between the partizans of the national sovereignty, there is not between them absolute antagonism.

The Napoleons are the defenders of the direct sovereignty of the people. That doctrine has been given up by many Republicans, simply from fear of the result of popular votes.

What a plebiscite founded, another plebiscite can alone replace.

I do not represent a party, but a principle and a cause.

That cause is that of all, a great deal more than my own.

That principle is the right of the people to elect his chief. To deny that right is an insult to *national sovereignty*.

The Government is falling to pieces, but a powerful democracy like ours cannot long avoid the necessity of constituting authority and order. The people is aware of that. He proved it on the occasion of the plebiscites of 1800, 1802, 1815, 1848, 1851, 1852, and 1870.

Frenchmen, remember those words of Napoleon I.: "Tout ce qui se fait sans le Peuple est illégitime."*

NAPOLEON.

* All is illegitimate that is done without the co-operation of the people.

On January 16, by order of the Government, Prince Napoleon was arrested at four o'clock P.M. and taken to the Conciergerie,* where he remained three hours in the office of the governor of the prison alone with M. Clement, a high police official who had been entrusted with the duty of arresting the author of the factious manifesto. Not a word was exchanged during the meeting.

At seven o'clock the *juge d'instruction* † entered with his clerk, and questioned the Prince for the first time.

The illustrious prisoner was treated with great harshness.‡ A refusal was persisted in to grant the authorization for his counsels to confer with their client, and likewise permission was denied his friends to see him. For several days the Prince was almost completely shut off from the outside world, so much so, that his treatment much resembled solitary confinement.

Petty vexations were added to those exasperating

* A famous Paris prison. † The examining judge.
‡ George Lachaud's *Histoire d'un Manifeste.*

measures. The Prince was subjected to a close and irksome watch. At night the warders used to lift the curtain of the door, in order to make sure that the Prince was in bed. Theodule, the Prince's valet, had to go through long and wearisome formalities before obtaining the permission of sweeping the room. The food of the Prince was subjected to the closest inspection, and boards were placed against the windows, thereby so darkening the room that it was almost impossible to see to write.

Prince Napoleon noted scrupulously all the incidents which occurred between the time of his arrest and that of being set at liberty.

Amongst those notes the following lines are noticeable as mentioning a very just idea which had just crossed his mind, and which he was anxious to communicate to his counsels:

"The Constitution being susceptible of a total or partial revision, cannot be considered as definitive. A reviseable Constitution is provisional, and cannot enjoy either the rights or the powers of a definitive Constitution."

The whole defence of the Prince was summed up in those lines.

On January 20, Prince Napoleon was subjected to a second examination. A few witnesses were questioned, and the *Chambre des mises en accusation*,* having read their depositions, repeated the word of the *juge d'instruction*, "*Rien !*" †

At that date, the illustrious prisoner received a very artless and very fine letter from his son Victor, then serving as a volunteer in the army. In that letter the young soldier nobly expressed the ardent desire he felt of taking part in his father's captivity. Prince Victor wrote several letters to Prince Napoleon. He was, however, denied the consolation of visiting his father in prison, the colonel of his regiment declining to grant him leave of absence. When in February Prince Victor had, at last, obtained permission to go to Paris, Prince Napoleon had already left the Conciergerie for the

* The court whose duty it is to decide whether the evidence is such as to warrant the committal of prisoners.

† No evidence.

private establishment of Doctor Béni-Barde, at Auteuil.

The Empress Eugenie, in a letter addressed to her political friends two days before her arrival in Paris, informed them that she had now "forgotten the disagreements which formerly existed" between her cousin and herself, and only "remembered the great name they both bear."

The Empress did not see Prince Napoleon in prison. Not one of Her Majesty's friends would have allowed her to go and solicit an order to see the prisoner from M. Benoît.

Prince Napoleon declined being let out on bail; but, when informed that the Tribunal had decided not to commit him, he merely exclaimed: "*Allons! il y a encore des magistrats!*"*

He was a prisoner for twenty-four days. From January 16 to February 24 he constantly secured the triumph of his rights. Public opinion, the law and the authorities unanimously acknowledged them. He carried his point so successfully that his most

* "Thank God! justice still exists!"

shameless enemies were obliged to abstain for a time from denouncing him and his acts.

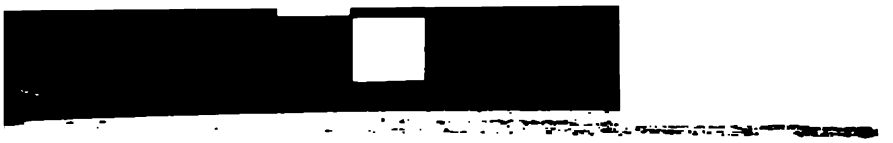
In answer to Prince Napoleon's manifesto, the Government of the Republic decreed that no member of the royal or imperial families of France should continue to serve the country actively in any capacity whatever.

Since 1883, Prince Napoleon has devoted his time to travelling and studying, thus preparing himself by meditation to occupy fitly the position it may please God to give him.

Born in a foreign land during the banishment of his family, the decrees relative to the "expulsion of the Princes" have again proscribed him and his family. His favourite residence is now his Prangins Villa, Switzerland, where he has written the following defence in vindication of the memory of his great uncle.

RAPHAËL LEDOS DE BEAUFORT.

LONDON, *November, 1887.*



NAPOLEON

AND

HIS DETRACTORS.

NAPOLEON

AND

HIS DETRACTORS.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

WHILST writing his *Histoire des Origines de la France Contemporaine*, M. Taine, in a sense, passed a judgment on Napoleon. He studied him in his political and private life, and pointed out the amount of influence over the destinies of France which ought to be ascribed to the Emperor.

That book is simply a libel. It is, however, signed by a member of the *Académie Française*, an author of fame, who, in his writings, claims to pro-

ceed with the exactitude of scientific method. The book itself is overladen with notes and quotations which keep up the illusion and may induce reliance. Yet the facts it contains are outrageously distorted, and reflect discredit on the writer.

Remembering the proud scorn professed by Napoleon towards pamphleteers, I might, perhaps, have confined myself to quoting the outburst of national feeling so audaciously provoked by M. Taine.

At St. Helena, Napoleon thus expressed himself:

"I am doomed to become the prey of libel-writers, but I have little fear of becoming their victim; they will gnaw at granite.* My fame rests upon facts which mere words cannot destroy. Were the great Frederic, or anyone of his stamp, to write against me, it would be a different matter. I might then, perhaps, begin to feel alarm; but as for all the others, whatever wit they may display, their fire will be but with blank cartridge. In spite of all libels, I have no fear for my

* "Ils mordront sur du granit."

memory. Truth will be known, and the good I did will be weighed against the faults I committed. I feel no anxiety about the result. Immense sums of money have been vainly spent in subsidies to detractors. Soon all traces of their writings will have disappeared. As for my monuments and institutions, they will hand down my name to the most distant posterity."*

Such serenity befits none but a genius confident in his work.

For my part, I have considered that I had other duties to fulfil, and that my knowledge of the men and of the deeds of those heroic times made it incumbent on me to prevent such distortion of history.

The nephew of Napoleon, I was from my infancy brought up among his relations. I was, from my cradle, taught the history of his life ; I have edited his correspondence, and, in my converse with the witnesses of his life, I have gathered my

* *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier*, vol. xxxii. pp. 316, 356, 404.

information from those who shared his glory and his trials.

I am not writing a life of Napoleon; such a task would outstep the limits which I have prescribed for myself.

My sole aim is to confront with the man and his work, in all their vivid reality, the fabrications of a writer whose judgment is biassed and whose conscience is blinded by violent prejudice.

My intention is to show what amount of belief ought to be accorded to the contemporaries whose testimony M. Taine appeals to or perverts, and whom he selected purposely from amongst those whom an impartial historian would certainly mistrust. Such are Prince Metternich, who, owing to the exalted situation he occupied, to the important part he played, to his historic fame as well as to his personal knowledge of Napoleon—whose adversary he never ceased to be—deserves a special notice; Bourrienne, Napoleon's secretary, and Madame de Rémusat, lady-in-waiting to Josephine, who both defamed the man in whose intimacy they had lived; the Abbé de Pradt, who, after sharing the confidence of the Emperor, wrote recollections

each page of which bears evidences of treason; Miot de Mélito, an Imperial functionary, whose *Mémoires*, published after his death, have often been quoted by the enemies of Napoleon.

Of the works which I will term *de seconde main*, because of their having been composed with the help of previous writings, I need take no notice. Those works, written as they were by persons who did not witness the facts which they relate, cannot have any other value than that which attaches to their authors. They are mere expressions of opinion, which do not constitute evidence. But the sources from which M. Taine has drawn his information are those whose authenticity I wish to test, and whose value I would estimate.

From the retreat where I am penning these lines I see the mountains of that Savoy, which I helped to give to my country, casting their bold outline on the horizon. Misfortune makes men forgetful. I am now no more than an exile, but I would fain soften the banishment to which I am condemned by devoting the forced leisure thus left me to the calling to life again of that past whose glories are summed up in the name which I bear,

and whose vanished greatness should be the strength and the hope of our wavering patriotism.

To defend the memory of Napoleon is to serve France still.

NAPOLEON.

Prangins, Aug. 1887.

M. TAINE.

M. TAINE has had numerous predecessors. The foreigner had hardly entered Paris before traducers rose from all parts in order to load with insults the leader of the grand army, the defender of the grand nation. From 1814 to 1830, every means was resorted to in order to debase his memory. Sincere convictions and venal hatred vied with each other in their zeal to effect that object; official literature and that of scurrilous pamphlets united their efforts in pursuance of a common aim. No worse calumnies will ever be invented; and M. Taine, who drew so largely from those impure sources, is a worthy disciple of the writers who inspired him. But the Bourbons, those *protégés* of the Holy Alliance, were spending their

energies on a fruitless attempt. The people had kept their belief unshaken ; Napoleon, the armed apostle of the Revolution, had become their pride and hope, and they delighted in throwing the Emperor's name in the teeth of the foreigners and of the *émigrés*. His glory was sung in the cottages of the poor; veterans preserved, with the same love and in the same hiding-place, a shred from the tricolour flag and a portrait of the martyr of St. Helena.

A few brave-hearted men dared to tell the true story of the Revolution they had seen, and of the Empire which had dazzled them. M. Taine, who has stirred up all the mire of 1815, does not mention a single one of their writings. Can it be that he only wishes to listen to the voice of hatred, rancour, and apostasy ? Does he regard impartiality and independence in a historian as reasons for doubting his veracity ?

It was the memory of Napoleon that led to the Revolution of July. Having come to the throne by means of a Parliamentary usurpation, the younger branch of the Bourbons, after violating both monarchical and popular rights, sought

shelter behind the traditions of the Empire. Though it proved incapable of grasping them, it nevertheless succeeded in turning them to account. Napoleon's family was left in exile; the interdict passed upon it by the Holy Alliance was not removed. But the official honours paid to the great man's memory appeared to the deluded nation in the light of a sort of worship of its hero, and, finding in that some satisfaction to its generous impulses, the nation forgave the weaknesses of a narrow-minded *régime* and the deceptions which it practised. "He was Emperor and King, he was the lawful sovereign of our country"; thus did Count de Rémusat, Minister of the Interior, express himself in the name of King Louis-Philippe, when proposing to the Chambers the return of the ashes of the Emperor.

It was not sufficient, however, to bring back the remains of Napoleon and to prepare for them a triumphant progress across mourning France; what was needed was to re-awaken the spirit, if not the genius of the hero—but the tax-paying oligarchy was essentially opposed to such lofty aspirations.

Panic carried away the throne which intrigue had raised.

Blessed be the Republic of 1848, which again made citizens of us ! In those days loyalty had not yet been banished from the province of politics. Those who called themselves democrats did not outrage democracy in all their decrees. They instituted universal suffrage and did not mistrust its verdict ; they did not enclose in false formulæ the expression of its will. The first act of the Republican Government was to grant again to the nation the right of voting. The Constitution conferred upon the people the right of choosing its leader, and the first act of the people was to entrust the power to a Napoleon.

Such had been the outcome of the libels of the Restoration. From 1851 to 1871, libellers again took up the pen and have not yet laid it aside. Amongst them we see sons of the Revolution, encouraged or subsidised by the Bourbons, furiously denouncing Bonaparte; and Royalists, who needed no bribe, resorting once more to their old calumnies. Those attacks, ostensibly levelled at Napoleon I., were in reality aimed at Napoleon III. In order to destroy the imperial edifice, its adversaries wanted to bring

down its founder. Those writings, the result of bitter hostility, invariably instigated by the passions of contemporary politics and never by a desire to respect historic truth, are doomed to oblivion ; they possess neither the spirit of a lampoon nor the impartiality of history. Their authors, being too cowardly to aim direct shafts, insulted the present in the past, and thus created a sort of hybrid and spurious literature, which borrowed even from Roman history its insidious allusions and scarcely-veiled insinuations. In studying Napoleon I., that new school underrated our victories and overrated our disasters ; decried our soldiers and extolled our enemies. It especially applied itself to disparaging the institutions of our Revolution in order to glorify those of the foreigner. It expressed admiration for Englishmen and professed much interest in Prussians, Austrians and Russians, but never in Frenchmen.

This literature is summed up in a sentence of the letter which, on January 1, 1871, M. Vitet, of the *Académie Française*, addressed to the editor of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, and which ran thus: "The Empire fell as it was bound to fall in order

to lose all chance of ever coming to life again . . . However dreadful and fatal it may otherwise be, a year which has the honour of having witnessed such a release is not barren in its results; we are scarcely justified in cursing it, but, if we do, our anathema must be tempered by deep gratitude. . . . I foresee a time, believe me, notwithstanding our despondent thoughts, when, all things considered and weighed, we shall bless that year."

After the downfall of the second Empire, there was a new cause for the cropping up of libels: the publication of a defamatory pamphlet against Napoleon I. or Napoleon III. proved an easy road to success; all sorts of unprincipled persons resorted to it and carried it to extremes. It proved a short cut to the highest situations; and only required a little wit and plenty of malice. In time, however, that became wearisome. Libellers are now growing scarce; history will perhaps resume its work. That was, no doubt, the time M. Taine was looking forward to for adding a supreme and final insult to that heap of calumnies.

In the meantime who is M. Taine? What is his system? What is his method and what does he

teach? What is the kind of philosophy from which he draws his inspirations, what sort of enthusiasm carries him away, by what logic is he guided? How is it possible that a writer, who hitherto was held in esteem by his very opponents, could have stooped to write those closing pages of the history of the Revolution, which are but the triumph of sophistry and paradox, and that picture of Napoleon which aroused as much surprise as indignation?

M. Taine is an entomologist; he was intended by nature to classify and describe collections of pinned insects. He is possessed by his taste for that kind of study; to his eyes, the French Revolution is "but the metamorphosis of an insect casting its slough." * He sees everything with his short-sighted eyes; he works with a magnifying glass, and his sight becomes dim and indistinct as soon as the object he examines reaches certain proportions. He then investigates with still more attention; he looks for a spot whereupon to direct his

* Taine's *Origines de la France Contemporaine*, Preface to vol. i. p. 5.

microscope, and hits upon an explanation which brings down to the level of his sight the dimensions which had at first puzzled him.

Whether as a critic of literature or of art, as a historian or as a philosopher, he always proceeds on the same method. Ungenerous in heart, narrow in mind, inaccessible to vivid intuition or noble impulses, perpetually analysing, his dissecting pincers always in hand, he delights in probing even to the innermost fibres of his victim, without a cry from the soul, without any aspiration towards the ideal. When judging a philosophical system, M. Taine would fain know the medical bulletin of the philosopher's life ; and when examining a work of art, he cannot rest without ascertaining the pathological state of the painter or sculptor. For him, the morality of the Reformation is due to the consumption of beer. Place him before the picture of a master, and ask him his opinion of a woman's hair in it, he will try to count how many hairs she has on her head. His articles are but a mosaic composed of phrases patiently borrowed from previous libels ; they lack homogeneity ; they are but patches ; they present evident traces of being but a subtle

patchwork, wherein the writer mixes with special skill the passages he reproduces and those he invents.

When one confines one's talent to bringing together a series of insignificant facts, one should at least be circumspect in one's conclusions and discreet in the use of theories. On the contrary, M. Taine is lavish of the latter, and, with a display of so-called scientific form, he repeatedly drifts into mere ideology. In the field of human science, there is no system to which M. Taine does not pretend to have imparted new features. His books, although bearing on so many different subjects, display each and all the impress of that metaphysical folly which he ridicules in others. He collects voluminous documents, but his mind, lacking the faculty of embracing at a glance the materials of which he intends to make use, mixes, confuses, and forgets them all. It fixes itself on some imperceptible point, on some side issue which others would judiciously disregard, and, grouping his facts contrarily so as to invert their importance, and arranging his ideas the reverse way to that warranted by their worth, brings forth some idle deduction in

which M. Taine complacently recognizes and admires himself. He then loses all shrewdness, precision, impartiality and good faith ! He falls a prey to the idea he has evolved and allows it to carry him captive and to blind his judgment ; he no longer admits the existence of anything likely to oppose his chimera ; everything must be adapted to it and must help it forward. Curtailed extracts, incomplete quotations, unreliable information, apocryphal documents, ridiculous legends, texts which he alters in order to defend and glorify his theory, such are the weapons of which M. Taine makes use with a want of conscientiousness happily rare. He has thus succeeded in building up a series of systems in literature and in philosophy ; but history does not lend itself to such witty frauds, and the writer who stoops to them only meets with contempt.

Being accustomed to detect and criticise infinitesimal and insignificant facts, and to attribute that which to us appears lofty to a lower motive undiscovered hitherto, M. Taine was framed to be what he really is—a Materialist. In the work in question he does not disown his principles: in attacking the French Revolution, with more violence

than Joseph de Maistre * and more fanaticism than De Bonald, † he remains a Materialist pure and simple. It is even in the name of atheistic philosophy that he ridicules the liberal ideas of the Eighteenth Century. In the eyes of M. Taine, "man is a dangerous animal, a ferocious and wanton gorilla," ‡ than which no assertion is more hateful. Owing to its belief in a Divine source, and in responsibility before God, the absolutism of the *ancien régime* still preserved a certain ideal; while those theories of slave-dealers, that policy of slave-drivers, can provoke nothing but indignation. To regard human beings in such a light is to lower them to the level of irresponsible brutes, and that is the result of M. Taine's philosophy. Why speak to him about virtue and vice? He will allow us still to use those expressions, but without attaching to them the

* Joseph Marie Count de Maistre, a Sardinian author of unsurpassed wit. He was a most fanatic champion of Monarchy and of the Papal Church.

† Louis Gabriel Ambroise Viscount de Bonald, an eminent French writer, and the founder of a philosophical system based upon Condillac's. In politics he was a fanatical partisan of Absolute Monarchy.

‡ Taine's *Origines de la France Contemporaine*, vol. iii.

meaning which they previously possessed, without regarding them as implying any idea of merit or demerit. "Virtue and vice are products like vitriol and sugar."* Is it for that sentence—which struck me amongst many others—that M. Taine became the oracle of the extreme clerical party ?

The early result of such philosophical teachings is to develop deep-seated pessimism in the mind which allows itself to be guided by them. I am not aware of the exact causes which gave rise to the bitterness of feeling noticeable in all the productions of M. Taine; were I to follow his method, I might, no doubt, trace them. I prefer to ascribe it to his philosophy alone. M. Taine notices chiefly the evil side of things; he is fond of describing it. In the last volume of his *Histoire de la Révolution*, as also in the latter portion of his essay on Napoleon, he brings together all sorts of horrors with a certain morbid pleasure.

An epic like the Revolution, a heroic legend like the Empire, requires a historian with a soul

* Taine's *Histoire de la Littérature Anglaise* (Introduction to, § 3), vol. i. p. 15.

as lofty as the events he records. Something better than the scepticism of a disabused epicurean, or the pedantry of a philosopher, is needed to rise to the understanding of that extraordinary period which changed the face of Europe, and shook the foundations of society. For such a task gifts are required which M. Taine is devoid of, and will never possess.

After having denounced the faults and follies of the *ancien régime*—in a criticism justified in most cases, although still bearing the stamp of that envious hatred which may be called the characteristic of his mind—M. Taine attacks the Revolution, and declares it to have been a remedy worse than the evil itself. What, however, could Frenchmen do? Being subjected to an intolerable Government, they sought to reform it; and, whatever sophists of every school may think to the contrary, the Revolution, ennobled by so many lofty thoughts and such generous aspirations, originated in a mere act of common sense. It extended the sphere of its action, and transformed itself under the repeated provocations of the Court and of those who held privileges. M. Taine does not make the slightest

allusion either to the terrible struggle the French Revolution had to sustain both at home and abroad, or to the hostile opposition which forced it to change its character, and to return blow for blow. From his writings, we might believe the Revolution to have been but the work of a handful of madmen, indulging in endless crimes and destroying existing institutions, without any other motive than the furious frenzy which filled them.

M. Taine blames Louis XVI. for having convened the States-General; he likewise blames the latter for having assumed constituent powers; and, finally, blames the Constituent Assembly for having destroyed that very *ancien régime* which he himself treats with such severity. He has searched Parisian and provincial records, and carefully noted all the agitations of those troubled times. He, however, makes no mention of the plots of the *émigrés*, of the appeal of royalty to foreign intervention, of the letters of the Queen, who used to be present at all the Cabinet Councils in order to acquaint the Austrian Generals with the movements of our armies; he does not say a word of the institutions created by the Constituent Assembly, of those noble

exertions which became the foundations of our new laws, and placed modern society on a firm and indestructible basis. On the other hand, the historian carefully devotes lengthy notices to every village scuffle, and even to cases of cattle-stealing. That is what he calls the *Origines de la France contemporaine*. Whom does he really hope to deceive?

In his fourth volume, entitled the *Gouvernement révolutionnaire*, M. Taine insists upon fables which have been repeatedly refuted; he reproduces apocryphal documents, and constantly quotes, as specially reliable sources of information, the reports of foreign spies, and of those royalist agents whom the coalition maintained in France at a considerable expense, and who, in order to give some return for the salary they received, furnished their employers with weekly batches of false and calumnious news. He has no mercy towards the men of that period. In his eyes they are simply bandits, whom history —he finds it hard to tell why—is obstinately bent upon regarding as orators, statesmen, generals, and patriots; at the bottom they are all alike, Girondists and Montagnards, the leaders of clubs and those of armies. In his preface, M. Taine confesses

that that conception of the Revolution is entirely his own; he is right. Until now, the greatest adversaries of the French Revolution had acknowledged a kind of Satanic grandeur in it; but, for M. Taine, the history of the Revolution is simply to be compared with the revolt of convicts, for subduing which grape-shot is the only suitable means.

As a soldier and the general of the Revolution, Napoleon could not escape being insulted by M. Taine. The historian could not spare the national and legendary hero; he could not confess that his criticisms would attack that reputation of granite in vain. What has he done? He compiled the manifestoes of the Holy Alliance, the libels of the Restoration, the memoirs or pseudo-memoirs written by the enemies of France and of the Emperor; he derived his inspirations from their spirit, he borrowed whole pages from their works.

Such a method is unworthy of a serious writer. A historian does not allow the events he relates to confuse him; he compares them, and throws light upon them. His mind has classified, his conscience

weighed, his intelligence assimilated them; he judges the whole from a lofty and disinterested point of view, and does not allow his verdict to be influenced by personal and purely human considerations.

M. Taine does not confine himself simply to consulting the writers of libel; in those violent and scurrilous writings, dictated by interest, personal enmity, and disgraceful motives, he selects the violent expressions, specimens of intemperate language, the very words even which have escaped lampoon-writers, and, faithful to his entomological habits, he "makes a collection of them." Repeated contradictions, unjustified exaggerations, unreliable assertions, monstrous or grotesque inventions, he reproduces all, without scruple, being only anxious to add specimens to his "collection." He is, at times, in spite of himself, carried away by the colossal figure of Napoleon, and gives way to the fascination of his grandeur; he, however, soon disowns what to him is an error of judgment, he condemns his own approval, and punishes himself for the weakness which led him to confess truths foreign to the thesis he marked out to

himself. He resumes his task, makes his premises stronger still, goes from denial to denial, stumbles at every step, and gets hopelessly involved in events and texts; having lost all discernment, he afterwards loses all common sense; he is himself deluded by the chimera he has created, and which leads him to draw a portrait of Napoleon bearing the impress of that lack of conscience proper to a man in the state of hallucination.

"Napoleon is not a Frenchman; he is an Italian; a *condottiere*. To understand him we must go back to the petty Italian tyrants of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries; to the Castruccio-Castracanis; to the Braccios of Mantua; to the Piccininos; the Malatestas of Rimini, the Sforzas of Milan."*

Thus Napoleon, who carried the glory of France to such a height, Napoleon, whose name is regarded all over the world as the symbol of the imperishable lustre of French genius, and who assimilated himself with our flesh and blood, our thoughts and our institutions, in so thorough

* Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, February 15, 1887, pp. 722, 729.

a manner that we can no longer conceive modern France without him — Napoleon is foreign to France! The author of the *Concordat* and of the *Code Civil*, the victor of Austerlitz and Jena is an Italian *condottiere*, a petty tyrant of the small mediæval republics! Farther on, M. Taine endeavours to increase his paradox. Acknowledging, at least, that there is some grandeur in the Emperor's infamy, he compares him with the Borgias.* . . . It is quite sufficient to quote such insanities. Any comment would be idle.

According to M. Taine, Napoleon was "anti-French during the whole of his youth." At Brienne† he used to say to Bourrienne, his schoolfellow, "I shall do all the harm I can to your countrymen." Bourrienne‡ is a writer particularly open to suspicion, whose testimony I intend examining later on; still, if one quotes Bourrienne one should,

* Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 14.

† The seat of a military school in the department of Aube, where, before the Revolution, young French noblemen used to serve as cadets.

‡ Louis Antoine Fauvelet de Bourrienne, the unworthy friend of Napoleon.

at least, quote him according to the text. In point of fact, Bourrienne says that Bonaparte, when nine years old, was "exasperated by the scoffs of his school-fellows, who often used to make fun of him about his surname and country," and that, when Bourrienne tried to calm him, the child used to reply: "As for you, I love you; you never make fun of me."* This dialogue, so natural and almost touching between children, becomes, in the hands of M. Taine, a weapon against Napoleon. He uses it as a corner-stone whereupon to build a whole theory concerning the sentiments of the future Emperor towards France. Is it possible to carry further the art of finding in texts what they really do not contain?

Like all proud-minded Corsicans, Napoleon was, in his youth, a great admirer of Paoli.† The latter was the defender of Corsican independence; he had won world-wide fame, and

* *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol. i. pp. 33–34.

† Pascal Paoli, youngest son of the great Corsican patriot, Hyacinth Paoli.

possessed the esteem and sympathy of all lofty minds in Europe. In 1789, the National Assembly unanimously passed a decree proclaiming Paoli a French citizen, and admitted the Corsican patriot to the honour of a seat in its Chamber. No wonder, therefore, that young Bonaparte should have considered him as his master and model; anyone but M. Taine would see in that love for Paoli the attraction which urges a generous heart towards an unfortunate hero. On his return from exile, Paoli became again the ruler of Corsica. Napoleon Bonaparte, whose genius he is said to have foreseen, although then very young, became his personal friend. But, in 1793, Paoli turned against France and called in the English. The Bonapartes, without a moment's hesitation, declared against him. Having been expelled from Ajaccio, their house was burned, they themselves were hunted after even in the *maqui*,* where they had been precipitately compelled to take refuge. After a period

* The "bush" in Corsican.

of sore trials, they succeeded in reaching the coast and finding shelter in the Girolata tower ; and, having embarked in the midst of the greatest difficulties, and with anguish in their hearts, they landed at Toulon, and, afterwards, settled in Marseilles. These pretended anti-French had fled from Corsica in order to go to France at all risks.

One of the most lively recollections of my youth is the account given by my father of the arrival of our family in a miserable house situated in the lanes of Meilhan.* Victims of their love for France, the exiles, devoid of resources and help, found themselves in the greatest poverty. Their only guide was their mother, a brave woman who, in times of trial, was always their counsel and their help. My father added that a certain sight remained deeply impressed upon his memory as a child : shortly after his arrival in Marseilles he noticed cartloads of victims being driven to the place where the guillotine stood! . . . That was the result of the bloody anarchy from which Napoleon was to rescue his country.

* A poor district of Marseilles.

With the calculated incoherence usual to him, M. Taine heaps up without method, without logical connection and gradation, the accusations he casts at Napoleon. I am, therefore, bound to follow him in the order of succession which he imposes upon me.

"Napoleon neither knows how to speak French nor how to write it."*

That may be, if by language is meant orthography united to a certain harmony; but if to know how to write means to make use of correct, precise, and clear words, crisp and such as appeal to the imagination; if it means to make oneself always admirably understood while instructing and carrying the readers with one, the author of the proclamations to the army in Italy, of the bulletins of the Grand Army, of thousands of letters treating of numerous and diverse subjects, and bearing all the impress of the same style, the man who dictated the St. Helena *Memoirs*, who contributed treatises on the art of

* Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, February 15, 1817, p. 726.

war—real masterpieces of concision and of exactitude—and wrote the stories of his campaigns in Italy and in Egypt—inimitable models of historical narrative—that man knew how to write and was fully conversant with the French language. No writer ever caused men's hearts to vibrate to the same degree, none ever moved or captivated them more deeply.

"Instead of subordinating his personality to the State, Napoleon subordinated the State to his personality." *

Napoleon used to work for twelve, and even fifteen hours a day; he never allowed pleasure to take up one hour of the time he devoted to the business of the State. He disdained luxuries, slept on the bare ground, was ever moving over France or the rest of Europe, and never hesitated or drew back when public interest was at stake. He used to save from his civil list in order to assist the national treasury. A single idea absorbed his life, a single sentiment ruled

* Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 42.

all his actions: the idea of France's greatness; the ardent wish to make her ever more prosperous and powerful. To the closing day of his wonderful career, after his second abdication, when the Bourbons returned in the rear of the Allies, when so many generals and Ministers only thought of protecting their fortunes and securing their dignities by negotiating with the new-comers and with the enemy, Napoleon was still the only one to think of his country.

On hearing the Prussian guns attacking Aubervilliers,* Napoleon's genius is stirred again. The Prussians, under Blücher, have ventured to advance to a distance of 120 miles from their base of operations; the English army is two days march behind them. The Emperor, who had retired to Malmaison,† offered to take the command of the troops as General, and to fall upon the Prussians, who had scarcely sixty thousand men to oppose to the seventy-five thousand men of Da-

* A village near Paris.

† The residence of the Empress Josephine.

vout;* he further bound himself to "go to the United States there to accomplish his destiny,"† after having punished the enemy for their temerity. He gives orders to have his horses saddled, dons his uniform, and sends for General Becker, to whom he engages his word as a soldier not to keep the command a single hour after the victory has been secured. General Becker delivered to the executive commission that supreme inspiration of patriotism and genius. He was received by Fouché.‡ . . . If, instead of losing precious time in view of fighting still, Napoleon had, at once, embarked upon one of the two French frigates which awaited him at Rochefort, he would have escaped the English cruiser, which had not yet had time to establish

* Marshal of France, Prince of Eckmühl, victor of Auerstadt over the Prussians, and of Eckmühl over the Austrians. His name is sometimes, though incorrectly, written Davoust, which latter is that of another French general who followed Bonaparte to Egypt and was killed there.

† *Relation de la mission du Lieutenant-général Becker auprès de l'Empereur Napoléon.* Clermont Ferrand, 1841.

‡ Member of the National Convention. He had, at first, been a friar. The Emperor, whom he afterwards betrayed, made him Minister of Police and created him Duke of Otranto. After the Restoration he became Minister of Louis XVIII.

the blockade, and would thus have avoided Saint Helena. That is the way in which he sacrificed France to his personality.

Napoleon is a *convulsionnaire*,* the mental strain of "accumulated impressions" resulting in his case in physical convulsions.†

Proof is produced in support of that assertion, and what is it? Merely that Napoleon, when under the influence of poignant grief, shed tears, like any other man. He weeps at the bedside of his dying friend Lannes‡; he weeps on hearing of the capitulation of Baylen,§ and also on parting with Josephine. What are we to conclude from this? That, as Bourrienne says in a sentence, mentioned in a foot-note by M. Taine, Napoleon was "feeling, kind, and sensible to pity." Nay, indeed, that explanation is too simple. In the same passage Bourrienne adds that the Emperor was—the com-

* A person subject to fits.

† Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 10.

‡ Marshal of France, Duke of Montebello, was killed at the battle of Essling.

§ When the army of General Dupont, 20,000 men strong, surrendered to the Spanish troops, July 23, 1808.

pliment is fully deserved—"good-natured." * M. Taine takes care not to recall the expression. If Napoleon is sensitive, it is, according to that historian, because he is *névropathique:* his tears are the result of a "physical convulsion." Others said that he easily gave way to emotion; that means for M. Taine that the Emperor's mind was "out of order."

Napoleon was cowardly in Provence; when he retired to Elba, "he was in bodily fear and had little thought of concealing it." †

The mob of the South, who murdered the Royalists in 1792, and the Republicans in 1795, shouted in 1814, "Vivent les alliés!" insulted the French uniform and hailed the colours of the enemies. Some paid assassins attempted the life of the Emperor, and, as a set-off for their failure, murdered Marshal Brune, a year later. The outburst of those odious passions was looked upon by Napoleon as more insulting to his patriotism than harmful to his person. He was, doubtless, much grieved by

* *Mémoires de Bourrienne,* vol. iii. p. 234 (not vol. ii. p. 119 as given by M. Taine).

† Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes,* March 1, 1887, p. 11.

the letting loose of such heinous passions. M. Taine insists that the Emperor was frightened and expressed his fears. I do not think it behoves me to question the courage of Napoleon; I will confine myself to pointing out the authority on whose testimony M. Taine bases his imputation: it is the *Nouvelle relation de l'Itinéraire de Napoléon de Fontainebleau à l'île d'Elbe*, by Count Waldburg-Truchsets, a commissioner appointed by the King of Prussia (1815)!* . . . After this all comments are superfluous.

When a child, Napoleon "bit and struck his brother Joseph"; when Emperor, he fought with his brother Louis, "seized him by the waist, and turned him out of his room."†

A new light is thus thrown on the relations which existed between Napoleon and his brothers; it needed M. Taine to sum them up in such striking instances. The writer appeals to Miot de Mélito, whose trustworthiness I shall discuss; indeed, he

* Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 11 (footnote).

† *Ibid.*, pp. 6 and 13.

gets so puzzled with his notes, that he cannot even indicate clearly from what passage he borrowed his quotation.* But what have we to do with those puerile or controverted anecdotes? Does history rest upon such old women's twaddle?

Napoleon, discussing with Volney † the matter of the Concordat, kicked him so violently in the stomach that, after having been removed to the house of a friend, the injured man had to keep his bed. At a dinner in Egypt, General Bonaparte upset the contents of a water-bottle over a young lady as a pretext for leading her to his apartment and taking advantage of her.‡

All this is intended to prove that the "working of the nervous machine" was "similar" in Napoleon as in "the Borgias." We are not told who was the inventor of all this trash. In a foot-note, M. Taine attributes it to Bourrienne; but his quotation is incorrect, for Bourrienne, at the page men-

* Miot de Mélito, vol. ii. p. 257 (not vol. i. p. 297, as given by M. Taine).

† Constantin François de Chassebœuf, Count de Volney, a learned French jurist bitterly opposed to Napoleon.

‡ Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, pp. 5 and 6.

tioned, does not make the slightest allusion either to the dinner or to the water-bottle. It really sickens me merely to transcribe these turpitudes.

In 1813, at Dresden, Napoleon "cast a gratuitous insult in the teeth of M. de Metternich." *

The latter always denied the truth of this allegation. In his voluminous *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, M. Thiers, who had conversed often with Prince Metternich, is most positive as to the above declaration of the Prince. He, however, reminds his readers that "people say" that offensive words were spoken. Who are those "people"? The sentence in which Napoleon made allusion to the English gold, and which is reproduced by M. Taine, may very well be explained without constituting a direct and personal offence. Austria had just signed the Treaty of Reichenbach which, in consideration for a subsidy, bound Austria's cause to that of England. But M. Taine insists on saying that the Emperor insulted the Austrian Minister! The fits of passion to which Napoleon gave way towards Sir Hudson Lowe, furnish the writer with a

* Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 9.

similar argument, and he quotes regretfully the papers and letters of that gaoler. Sir Hudson Lowe is indeed entitled to all the sympathy of M. Taine. His dignity, his pride and his *impartiality* towards his prisoner, doubtless give infinite value to his testimony in the eyes of a philosopher who prides himself upon writing history!

Napoleon had a violent scene with Portalis,* *Directeur de la librairie*;† "he apostrophised him during a sitting of the Council of State" and dismissed him from his presence, for not having "turned informer against his cousin"; which shows that imperial officials were expected by the Emperor to "give up to him their consciences, their faith as Catholics, and their honour as gentlemen." ‡

Cardinal Maury, whom Napoleon had appointed Archbishop of Paris in 1810, had not received the

* He was the son of one of the editors of the *Code Civil*. His profound knowledge of jurisprudence was perhaps the chief reason why the Emperor was so incensed at his having tolerated the intrigues of his cousin.

† The title given in France to a high official whose duty it is to enforce the law concerning all publications and writings intended to be made public.

‡ Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 26.

canonical investiture from the Pope. At the head of the chapter of Notre Dame,* there was a certain Abbé d'Astros, a fanatical priest, strongly hostile to the Emperor. He was Portalis' cousin and afterwards became a cardinal. This canon was as violent in his conduct as he was intemperate in his language, and very improperly assumed the duty of acting as a spy on his bishop, Cardinal Maury. He used to cross all the latter's wishes, freely insulted him, and generally behaved to him in a scandalous manner; he even went so far as to rebel openly whenever the cross—the emblem of his episcopal dignity—was being carried before the Cardinal.

The Abbé d'Astros carried on a direct and secret correspondence with the Pope. The Minister of Police had ascertained this, through the seizure of a brief written with the purpose of deterring the bishops appointed by the Emperor from assuming the administration of their dioceses.

That brief soon became known in Paris, where it caused much scandal. Napoleon at once ordered an inquiry to be made. He was informed that, a

* The Metropolitan Church of Paris.

few days before, the Abbé d'Astros had shown the brief to his cousin, the DIRECTEUR DE LA LIBRAIRIE, who took no steps to prevent its circulation. All these incidents are related by Count d'Haussonville, who can scarcely be regarded as unduly biassed towards the first Empire : his narrative is based upon information borrowed from manuscript notes in the Abbé d'Astros' own handwriting, and from an apologetic life of that prelate by the Rev. Jesuit Father Caussette.

The Emperor was indignant. After the Concordat, that act of supreme wisdom, all that was of a nature to provoke religious discord was particularly hateful to him. He also had another cause for irritation. He could not witness with composure Portalis lending a hand to secret dealings, the object of which was to carry on a constant opposition to the Imperial policy. It may be interesting to recall the chief events in Portalis' career.

As the son of the great Portalis, one of the authors of the Civil Code, Count Joseph-Marie Portalis had been loaded with favours by Napoleon. His father and himself were exiles at the time of 18 Brumaire. Whilst Consul, Bonaparte raised the

father to the most exalted situations, and young Portalis entered on a diplomatic career. In the space of ten years he ascended all the degrees of the service, and was appointed to important posts. On finding him implicated in a secret conspiracy against his authority, the Emperor severely reminded him that, as an official and as a man, he owed him everything. The scene in the Council of State took place on January 5, 1811; a few months before, Joseph-Marie had been, as a special mark of favour, created Count of the Empire, with an income of ten thousand francs * a year. Two years after, in 1813, Napoleon forgave Portalis, and appointed him *Premier Président* † of the Court of Angers, although he was but thirty-five years of age. After having served all the subsequent Governments which ruled France, Joseph-Marie Portalis died as a Senator of the Second Empire. After this it will not be easy to hold him up as a victim of the tyrant.

"On his return from Spain, Napoleon had an

* About four hundred pounds sterling.

† A position similar to that of a First Judge.

outrageous and memorable scene with M. de Talleyrand." *

Whilst the Emperor was away in Spain, Talleyrand had secretly conspired against him. Carried away by the spirit of scheming ambition which ruled all his life, seeing that his intrigues were disclosed, he dreamed of a new Government brought about by the death of the Emperor. It seemed to him likely that Napoleon, intrepid in danger, might probably ere long be killed in action. After having long been the adversary of Fouché, Talleyrand sought to enter into close relations with him. These two men, thoroughly fit to understand each other, mutually agreed, should an opportunity present itself, to betray the Empire, of which they were the highest dignitaries.

Talleyrand openly sold his influence. On several occasions the Emperor had already been compelled to interfere in order to repress his thirst for gold. When Napoleon became acquainted with the designs of the Vice-Grand Elector,† and with

* Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 9.

† A dignity created by Napoleon, and imitated from the German Empire.

his scandalous utterances, when he was informed of the perfidious accusations brought against him by Talleyrand, of the affectation of the latter in playing the part of a counsellor to whose advice no heed was paid, and of his violent diatribes against the very acts of which he was the instigator, the offended Sovereign tried to recall his Minister to a sense of shame. He no longer possessed any illusion concerning his fidelity, he knew full well that Talleyrand was now actuated only by personal motives. Was he wrong in thinking so? M. de Metternich, who for a long time cultivated the acquaintance of M. de Talleyrand, and who had recourse to him in order to upset Napoleon, passes the following severe judgment on his friend and accomplice:—

"M. de Talleyrand was possessed of a peerless intellect. I have been in sufficiently close contact with him to study him thoroughly, and detect that his faculties were more suited for destroying than for building up. Though a priest, his temperament carried him into the path of irreligion; though a nobleman by birth, he pleaded in favour of the surrender of the privileges of the nobility; under the Republican *régime*, he plotted against the Re-

public; under the Empire, he was *constantly* involved in conspiracies against the Emperor; and in the end, under the Bourbons, he aimed at upsetting the lawful dynasty."*

M. de Metternich adduces a proof of Talleyrand's intrigues in a report, dated December 4, 1808, which the Austrian Chancellor addressed to his master on the occasion of the meeting at Erfurt:

"In the first days which followed his arrival, Talleyrand called on the Emperor Alexander, and uttered those memorable words: 'What are you doing here, Sire? It behoves you to save Europe, and to do that you must not bend before Napoleon. The French nation is civilized, but its ruler is not; the Sovereign of Russia is civilized, but his people are not; it is, therefore, incumbent upon the Sovereign of Russia to be the ally of the French people.' The result of the conferences, with which M. de Talleyrand acquainted me as soon as he returned to Paris, was summed up in his conviction that, since the battle of Austerlitz, the relations between Alexander and Austria had not improved.

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 70.

'It only rests with you,' said he to me, 'and with your Ambassador at St. Petersburg, to secure with Russia relations as intimate as those which existed before the campaign. That union alone can save what remains of European independence.'" *

In another despatch, M. de Metternich writes from Paris to M. de Stadion, in Vienna: "I see nothing to add to the information I gave you in my last communication, concerning M. de Talleyrand. Both he and his friend Fouché appear to me to be still of the same mind, that is, bent upon seizing the occasion, if it offers, but devoid of sufficient courage to bring it about themselves." †

Was Napoleon wrong, therefore, in reproaching Talleyrand with his intrigues and treasons? and was he not justified in doing so with some sharpness? I leave the answer to honest people.

Napoleon "offered to Marmont, who refused to avail himself of it, the opportunity of stealing a chest." ‡ Whilst Pavia was being sacked, General

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. ii. p. 248.
† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 262.
‡ Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 17.

Bonaparte sent Marmont, his aide-de-camp, to fetch the Treasury of the Municipal Receiver, in order to save it from being looted. The officer fulfilled his duty to the letter. Later on, according to Marmont's memoirs, General Bonaparte reproached Marmont with not having kept that money.*

This account is inadmissible. Napoleon was inflexible in his honesty, and never tolerated any laxity in that respect. His greatest enemies acknowledged his efforts to impose upon his Government the strictest probity. How could he have blamed Marmont for having done his duty?

Marmont betrayed the Emperor and the country on the last day of the campaign in France. During all the rest of his life he dragged after him the crushing weight of his treason. He became an object of hatred and contempt, was looked upon with suspicion even by the Bourbons themselves, and, in 1830, he was denounced by the Duke d'Angoulême, who snatched his sword from him. Marmont died at Vienna, whither he had fled. In his memoirs, which are but the outpouring of a saddened and embittered

* *Mémoires de Marmont, Duc de Raguse*, vol. i. p. 180.

soul, he has not spared the Sovereign whom his defection had hurled from the throne. As the friend and confidant of Bonaparte in Italy, Marmont knew and ought to have remembered that, at the time when the Duke of Parma was about to sign a treaty with General Bonaparte, that prince offered the victor *two millions* in gold* in order to obtain better terms; and that, whilst scornfully declining those millions for himself, the General gave orders to have them paid at once into the army-chest. But the hatred of a traitor towards his benefactor blinded Marmont and led him to add, to a true incident of the revolt of Pavia, a false anecdote, which M. Taine naturally reproduced.

Besides having the character of the Borgias, Napoleon had also their morals; "he seduced each of his sisters" † . . . Such infamous allegations only arouse within me a feeling of pity towards the writer who reproduces them.

To this level has M. Taine fallen! This is the portrait he draws; these the facts he invents, the

* About £80,000 sterling.

† Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 6.

judgments he passes. This is what he calls the philosophy of history, the unravelling of great men's characters by the causes which produced them!

It is, however, worthy of notice that I have only mentioned the most striking insults.

The method of analysis, if applied earnestly and in good faith, by a writer sure of himself, may limit the scope of history without violating truth. But M. Taine displays extraordinary confusion and bad faith in his work. His references are, for the most part, incorrect. He confuses and mixes the most foreign and dissimilar facts. Two instances will suffice to enable us to estimate the reliance that may be placed on him as a historian.

The letters of Napoleon to his adopted son, the Viceroy of Italy, bear witness to the most lively solicitude; they are generally full of praises, and contain teachings on politics and on the art of ruling nations, of the highest interest. In that correspondence M. Taine only finds one letter deserving of notice. He gives it as a letter of Napoleon's, bearing the date of August 1806, and taken from the

Memoirs of Prince Eugène ("*une Lettre de Napoléon, tirée des Mémoires du Prince Eugène*").*

M. Taine reproduces the following extracts from that letter:—"Should you ask for His Majesty's orders or advice with a view to altering the ceiling of your room, you must wait for them; and if Milan were burning and you had applied to the Emperor for instructions in view of checking the conflagration, you should let the fire do its work of destruction until those instructions came. . . . His Majesty is not pleased with you. You must never encroach upon his prerogatives; the Emperor will never suffer you to do so; neither will he forgive you for attempting it." †

The only existing edition of the *Mémoires du Prince Eugène* contains twenty-six letters from Napoleon to the Viceroy of Italy, bearing the date of August 1806. The sentences above-mentioned are *not* to be found *in any* of those letters. Instead of a letter of Napoleon's, M. Taine copied one of

* Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 28 (footnote 3).

† *Idem*, p. 28.

*Duroc's,** dated July 31, 1805. The latter was on intimate terms with Prince Eugène, who, in July 1805, had just been appointed to the viceroyalty of Italy. As one friend writing to another, Duroc exaggerated, in soldier-like badinage, the thoughts of the Emperor; he stretched them to the extreme of absurdity; it was but a joke. M. Taine read Duroc's letter, seeing that he reproduces it. He, however, gives it as being one of Napoleon's; he alters its date, and takes it in earnest.

Here is another instance:

"He (Napoleon) divulges the secrets of his adversary's private life, of his study, of his married life; he defames or calumniates his ministers, his court, and his wife. . . ."†

The adversary here is the King of Spain, and, in support of his assertion, M. Taine furnishes the following note, the insidious drafting of which deserves special remark.

LETTER TO THE KING OF SPAIN, SEPTEMBER 18, 1803, AND NOTE TO THE SPANISH MINISTER OF

* Grand Marshal of the Palace under Napoleon.

† Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 34.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS CONCERNING THE PRINCE DE LA PAZ,* "THAT FAVOURITE WHO, BY THE MOST CRIMINAL MEANS, ATTAINED TO A DEGREE OF FAVOUR WITHOUT PRECEDENT IN THE RECORDS OF HISTORY. . . . MAY YOUR MAJESTY DISMISS FROM YOUR PRESENCE A MAN WHO, PRESERVING IN HIS EXALTED RANK THE VILE PASSIONS OF HIS LOW NATURE, MAINTAINED HIMSELF IN FAVOUR BY HIS VERY VICES."

The text of the quotation placed between inverted commas, and cut in two by means of dots, is a confusion of two very distinct documents. Indeed, the first sentence is taken from a note written by Talleyrand to the Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs—to whom he certainly had the right of speaking freely—whereas the second is an extract

* Manuel de Godoy or Godoï, Duke of Alcudia, Prince de la Paz, a Spanish adventurer, who eventually became for twenty years the Minister of Charles IV. of Spain, and one of the most powerful statesmen of his time. At an early age he entered the King's body-guard, and owing to his fine features, elegant figure, and pleasing address, as also to his musical ability, became the favourite of Queen Marie Louise. He rapidly rose to the post of Generalissimo of the Spanish troops in 1804, and was created Duke of Alcudia and Prince de la Paz as a reward for his having negotiated the treaty of Bâle. He fell with the abdication of the king.

from a letter of the Emperor's to King Charles IV. They have both been selected purposely, and *patched* together in order to lead readers to lose sight of the diversity of the correspondents for whom they were destined, and mislead them as to their true character. Thus brought together and pointed out as a piece of evidence, they seem to indicate that Napoleon acquainted the King of Spain with the guilty intercourse existing between the Queen and the Prince de la Paz. The reproduction of texts by means of such cutting and patching constitutes an offence against historical truth, not to say a forgery.

The truth is that, in 1803, Bonaparte directed a note, supplying information respecting the conduct of the Prince de la Paz, to be addressed to M. de Cevallos, Spanish Minister of Foreign Affairs. At the same time the First Consul * wrote personally to the King of Spain to entreat him to assume again the direction of the affairs of the State. This letter, which is a model of manly thoughts and firm language, gave the weak-minded Charles IV. advice

* Who had then been appointed consul for life.

which that Sovereign was unfortunately incapable of following. "If your Majesty asks me what remedy can be applied to the impending dangers which threaten you, I can only make one answer, in which your Majesty will recognise my sincerity and my friendship for yourself. *Govern by yourself* (*qu'elle remonte sur son trône*)."* Could the head of a State speak with more dignity to a Sovereign, his ally? Moreover, did not Bonaparte write with extreme moderation, considering the spectacle offered by the Spanish court in those days? It was reserved for M. Taine to undertake the rehabilitation of Manuel Godoy's memory.

It was also reserved for him to write a history of Napoleon entirely based upon the testimony of his enemies and adversaries; Bourrienne, Madame de Rémusat, Madame de Staël, the Abbé de Pradt, Prince Metternich, Sir Hudson Lowe, these are the authorities from whom M. Taine derives his information. He quotes Madame de Rémusat twenty-one times, fourteen times Miot de Mélito, eight times

* *Correspondance de Napoleon I^er.*, vol. viii., p. 680, No. 7,113.

Bourrienne and Prince Metternich, and six times the Abbé de Pradt. That alone does not satisfy M. Taine; he borrows the worst and most disgraceful calumnies—such as make the Emperor appear in the light of an assassin, and his Ministers in that of his accomplices *—from the unpublished Memoirs of M. X——, a source of information easy to verify and criticise indeed! Who is this M. X—— ? Talleyrand or Bourmont,† Fouché or Peltier,‡ Pasquier § or Sarrazin,‖ a pamphleteer in the pay of England, a Minister who betrayed his country, or a general who deserted his flag ? Where are those Memoirs? Who detains them ? In whose possession are they ?

* Taine, *Revue des Deux Mondes*, March 1, 1887, p. 27.

† Count de Bourmont, served as general under Napoleon, whose service he left for that of Louis XVIII.; became Marshal of France, and commanded the French troops which conquered Algiers in 1830.

‡ A French Royalist writer.

§ A famous jurist whom Napoleon loaded with favours, and who afterwards deserted him.

‖ Jean Sarrazin, literary man and general. Sold himself for £60,000 to England whilst in command at Flushing. Having been ordered to join the camp at Boulogne, his plot failed, and having escaped to England, he was tried by court-martial *in contumaciam* and sentenced to death.

Who fabricated them? We have a right to know; M. Taine is not justified in simply referring to any name—any M. X—— that chance may suggest to him.

Such are M. Taine's references. He hardly deigns to open the *Correspondance de Napoléon* and regards it with mistrust, doubtless because I had the honour of superintending its publication. He makes no reference to the recollections dictated by Napoleon at Saint-Helena, nor to the voluminous accumulation of narratives and comments in which the Emperor portrayed and judged himself. The Ministers who faithfully served him, such as Bignon, Gaudin, Mollien, Boulay de la Meurthe, Champagny, Caulaincourt, Maret, Savary and Bertrand; the intimate companions of his labours like Fain, La Valette and Méneval; men who knew and saw Napoleon, who shared his good and his adverse fortune, and who, without hatred, interest or fear, dispassionately spoke the truth to posterity; all those generals, soldiers, writers, savants, or artists, whose names alone would fill several pages, are either suspected by or unknown to M. Taine.

He seems to be equally unaware of the existence

of Thiers and of Norvins,* of that of Laurent de l'Ardèche † and of Armand Carrel,‡ of Béranger§ as of Pierre Leroux;‖ he is likewise unacquainted with the republican Vaulabelle, the author of a history which is a real monument for the years 1814 and 1815, and with the legitimist Chateaubriand who, enlightened by events, and bequeathing his last thought to posterity, spoke in magnificent terms of that very Napoleon whom he had so long denounced.

M. Taine is silent as to all the military history of Napoleon: the General disappears from his view. Owing to some incredible lack of intellectual and moral appreciation, the epic struggle carried on by

* Baron de Norvins, the author of a History of Napoleon I., written from a Royalist point of view.

† Paul Matthieu Laurent, better known under the name of Laurent de l'Ardèche (his native department), entered the law and was a distinguished writer. His best-known work is a History of Napoleon, in which he refutes the Memoirs of the Duke of Ragusa.

‡ An eminent French writer; was killed in a duel with Emile de Girardin (1836).

§ The author of the best French popular and patriotic songs; well known for his worship of Napoleon.

‖ An eminent writer and philosopher of socialistic tendencies.

France against Europe, seems to him a matter of indifference or of secondary importance, or indeed does not exist. This strange historian loses sight of the war waged by the Revolution against the old world, that war which fills, influences, and explains all that troubled period. He indulges in the extraordinary paradox which consists in writing numerous pages on Napoleon without referring once to his military genius. M. Taine does not even allude to Arcole, Rivoli, Marengo, Austerlitz, Jena, Friedland, Montmirail, victories, the names of which are inscribed by the hundred on our colours, and which we preserve as an inexhaustible treasure of honour and glory, as an intangible patrimony which will enable us to build up again the tangible. All those vulgar incidents are powerless to disturb such a philosopher. However, he ought to know the truth: such recollections are always present to the memory of a people. The country does not consist only of its soil: it consists besides, and above all, of its history. To the "simple-minded Gauls, full of confidence and credulity," of whom this sceptic speaks with such scorn, Napoleon gave the advantages which they prize most: self-esteem, confidence in

their own worth, the reputation of being possessed of boundless courage and energy. Precious advantages which are appreciated most in the transient days of our disasters.

For Frenchmen worthy of the name, the only consolation, the only encouragement in the grief of the present, is to lose themselves in the grand recollections of the past. Napoleon's glory constitutes a national property; whoever lays violent hands on it renders himself guilty of high treason.

Does M. Taine consider that we are not sufficiently lowered, threatened, and perplexed, that he should thus endeavour to discredit the past of France? He may do as he pleases. The foreigner is anxiously listening, and is well satisfied. So was he in 1814 and in 1871.

In 1814, a few *émigrés*, the waifs of our revolutions and of our wars, being at last victorious after so many defeats, received with open arms the invaders whom they had anxiously expected for a quarter of a century. To celebrate fitly the presence of the Foreigner, they set about pulling down the image of the defender of France. Their infamous rope gave way.

In imitation of the men of 1814, and, like them, called together by our misfortunes, in 1871, an ignoble mob, abjuring the country, laid violent hands on the column of the Grand Army.* By pulling this down it hoped to stamp out for ever the very idea of military duty and of national greatness. It carried out its work of destruction. A few years later the column was raised again, and Napoleon stands on the top, holding in his hand the figure of Victory, in remembrance of the past and as a hope for the future.

As an *academical* demolisher, M. Taine could suitably be ranked with the iconoclasts of 1814 and the destroyers of 1871. His attempt proceeds from the same spirit; it was inspired by the same hatred; it deserves the same contempt.

* Better known as the *Colonne Vendôme.*

PRINCE METTERNICH.

Prince Metternich was, for forty years, Chancellor of the Austrian Empire, and, owing to his preponderating influence, the arbiter of what was termed the Holy Alliance. He was contemporaneous with and a witness of the events he relates. His *Memoirs* are of considerable importance to history.

Seeing that he was the chief opponent of Napoleon, and that he is one of his detractors, there is no cause for wonder in my devoting so much space to him. I shall, however, examine only the portion of his *Memoirs* that deals with Napoleon. I shall pass over his correspondence with Princess Metternich, his autobiography, and his official relations with Europe after 1815, for

they are items beyond the limits of the object I have in view. Besides, all those writings bear the same stamp of infatuation; from the account of the Congress of Rastadt,* where he made his *début*, and where he was surprised "to meet with politeness on the part of the French plenipotentiaries,"† to his dying words in 1859: "I am a pillar of order"‡ (*Je suis un rocher de l'ordre*).

* This Congress was marked by the assassination of the three plenipotentiaries of the French Republic. The negotiations having been broken on Floreal 4 year VI. (April 28, 1799); the French plenipotentiaries having left Rastadt with the assurance that they could safely proceed on their journey, although the usual escort had been refused them, were dastardly set upon at a short distance from the town by Szeckler's hussars and barbarously murdered. Roberjot and Bonnier were killed on the spot. Jean Debry, who had been left for dead and thrown into a ditch by the road, having returned to consciousness, succeeded in returning to Rastadt unrecognized, and sought the protection of Count Görtz, the Minister of the King of Prussia, until the next day, when he was enabled to start again under escort and in the company of the Deputies of the Frankfort Diet, who saw him cross the Rhine. That abominable breach of the law of nations aroused a general outburst of indignation throughout Europe, and, in spite of her denials, Austria has always been regarded as the instigator of the outrage.

† *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 346.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. viii. p. 647.

Clement von Metternich, the son of a Count of the Empire, and the future leader of absolutism in Europe, grew up, as he himself relates, under the influence of the circumstances in which he had been placed by his birth, and by the official position his father held at the Imperial Court.

In 1801, Clement von Metternich entered the service of the State, and was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of Saxony. In his very first official report (November 2, 1801) he insisted on the necessity of reducing France to her former frontiers; he deplored the *insouciance* with which the Saxon Government allowed "a spirit of infatuation hitherto unknown"* to spread in its dominions.

In 1803, having been transferred to the Embassy at Berlin, he displayed there the same hostility towards France; he played an important part in the negotiations carried on with the view of plotting a third coalition against us. On the very day following the Emperor's coronation he denounced Napoleon as having adopted "the mili-

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. ii. pp. 8, 15.

tary Government and the political principles which led the Roman Empire to a universal monarchy."* Haunted by the hatred and fear of France, he went so far as to suppose that the army held in readiness at Boulogne was intended solely to act against Austria.† The incorrectness and the puerility of that assertion are self-evident ; for, in 1805, the presence of the army assembled at Boulogne aroused in England unmistakeable fears. The debates in the English Parliament at that time bear witness to the state of bewildered excitement attained by the public mind. A Bill was passed prescribing the *levée en masse* of all men between seventeen and fifty-five years of age. In a proposal relative to the erection of temporary defences, intended to protect London, Pitt, then Prime Minister, declared that "the enemy's progress could thus be retarded only for a few days, so as to avoid, *perhaps*, the destruction of that capital." The Emperor was then watching with special eagerness the preparations of his great

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. ii. p. 37.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 39.

undertaking, and, far from thinking of Austria at that time, he pressed on his armaments so as to make it plain that his object was really England. The failure of his naval plan alone stopped him.

Metternich repeatedly worried Prussia to induce her to join Austria and Russia. He eventually secured her signature to the Treaty of Potsdam, rendered useless by Austerlitz. Metternich refused, however, to acknowledge our victory, and proposed to continue the war.* But Austria had no longer any army, and was obliged to surrender at the mercy of her victorious enemy. After the peace of Presburg, Metternich was appointed Ambassador to Paris. At his first interview with Napoleon, the latter appeared to him like the very personification of the Revolution.† In this instance, his hatred sharpened instead of blinding his judgment; Metternich was right, and his opinion of the Emperor was more correct than that of many Frenchmen in our days. "In Europe," he says, "France did

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. ii. pp. 83–92.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 51.

not possess a single friend."* This appreciation of the dispositions of European Governments towards us is also but too correct, and explains our long wars. Napoleon was opposed by a permanent coalition which victory alone could crush.

Metternich calls the French people of those days "a people degraded beyond all others, beyond anything that can be imagined, tired and demoralized to such an extent that all traces of national spirit are annihilated." † He talks of Napoleon's astute subversive and criminal policy, *a policy which he has been carefully and constantly carrying out since his accession.* ‡ Under the influence of these ideas, he strenuously and repeatedly endeavours to induce Austria to hold herself in readiness for another war: "By attaching the value of a peace to the treaties they concluded with France, the Powers have lost everything. No peace is possible with a revolu-

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 52.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 119. Despatch to his Minister, July 26, 1807.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 167. These words are underlined in the text (Despatch from Metternich to Stadion, April 27, 1808).

tionary system." * Acting on his advice, Austria went on arming and called out her last reserves.

At that time, there were men, even in Germany, who shrewdly judged M. de Metternich. In a letter from King Frederic of Würtemberg to his daughter, Catherine of Westphalia, and bearing the date of August 21, 1808, I read the following passage : "It is a pity that the Emperor Francis should be so badly represented as he is in Paris, for Count Metternich has been all his life but a . . . infatuated with his own merit."

Indeed, Metternich takes upon himself to justify that judgment. He writes the following conceited sentence : " You will now be convinced that, besides knowing how to act skilfully, we also know how to speak to the point. For some time, I have been successfully conversing *with Europe*, which is no easy matter. What gratifies me is to notice that the productions of my pen are always those which are most to the taste of the public." †

On the 10th of April 1809, whilst Napoleon was

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. ii. p. 167.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 263.

engaged with Spain, the Archduke Charles crossed the Inn and invaded Bavaria without previous declaration of war.

At the same time Austria strangely committed herself by having the French ambassador and his *attachés* arrested in Vienna and detained in Hungary ; an action which, though less barbarous than the assassination of our plenipotentiaries at Rastadt, was nevertheless a shameless violation of the right of nations. We did not, however, reciprocate that treatment towards M. de Metternich : his character was respected, the formality of delivering his passports was simply delayed.* On May 26, he received the authorization to proceed to Vienna, which was then occupied by our troops, and, on June 29 only, he was exchanged with the members of the French embassy whom the Austrians had detained as prisoners during nearly the whole of the campaign.

On July 8,—the day following the battle of Wagram,—M. de Metternich was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs, and went to Altenburg in that

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 67.

capacity, in order to enter into negotiations with M. de Champagny.*

The conference dragged on for three months without result. A treaty of peace was eventually signed by Prince John of Lichtenstein, on hearing of which M. de Metternich was much incensed, for he believed Austria to be in a position to continue the war.†

As soon as he was at the head of Foreign Affairs, M. de Metternich sedulously plotted the overthrow of the French Empire. No considerations could prevail against the feudal fanaticism of Metternich; neither the marriage of Napoleon with Marie-Louise, nor the special kindness which the Emperor displayed towards him on all occasions—and which went so far as an offer to annul the *mediatization* of his house and to make him a sovereign member of the Rhine Confederation ‡—nor the evident interest of Austria, which had everything to gain by

* Nompère de Champagny, Duke de Cadore, French diplomatist.

† *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. pp. 101, 102, 228, 233.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 103.

becoming frankly the ally of France. On his return from a special mission to Paris, during which Napoleon loaded him with favours and admitted him to the intimacy of Marie-Louise, the Austrian Minister wrote a report, full of hatred and malice, about France and the Emperor.*

Here is a genuine fact which demonstrates those hostile feelings. Metternich asserts that Josephine was not married religiously before the Coronation, he says that "Cardinal Consalvi told him that the Pope had, so to speak, sanctioned what, from a religious point of view, was but a concubinage." † Whereas the truth is that Napoleon and Josephine, who had only been married civilly under the Directory, were religiously united—to allay the scruples of the Empress—by Cardinal Fesch, in the presence of Talleyrand and of Berthier,‡ in the chapel of the Tuileries, during the night which preceded the Coronation. That is a fact known to me by my family traditions. It is mentioned by Count d'Haus-

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. ii. pp. 389–415.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 294.

‡ Marshal of France; created, by Napoleon, Prince of Wagram, in recognition of his services.

sonville, in his work entitled *L'Eglise romaine et le premier Empire*,* and related with striking details by M. Thiers.† Prince Metternich only died in 1859; he had seen M. Thiers several times, was in correspondence with him, and, although being his confidant, he had evidently not read the account of the Coronation, published in 1845, seeing that he persisted to the last in his gross mis-statement.

M. de Metternich would naturally be expected to write history; unfortunately his writings are frequently composed of anecdotes recorded by an unfaithful memory.

When the war with Russia broke out, Metternich signed, on March 14, 1812, a treaty whereby Austria bound herself to supply France with an auxiliary corps of thirty thousand men; both powers engaging to respect and to enforce mutually the integrity of each other's territory. At the very time when he signed that treaty, Metternich—so he himself confesses—expected and hoped for, if not

* Comte d'Haussonville, *L'Eglise romaine et le premier Empire*, vol. i. p. 327.

† Thiers, *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, vol. v. p. 251.

the catastrophes of the Russian campaign, at least such obstacles to the progress of Napoleon as would leave Austria free to interpose in his rear. With this in view, he instructed the Austrian contingent to abstain from all hostilities towards the Russians.* "History," so he wrote later on, with regard to that period, "will bear witness to my having made use of all the means in my power to second the hand of God." †

The retreat from Moscow dealt a terrible blow to Napoleon. It offered the occasion Metternich had been so long anticipating. "For many years," so he writes to his father, "my political progress has been unaltered. . . . It was not without purpose that, before undertaking the great task, I wished to be thoroughly acquainted with my adversary. . . . All that remained was to find the opportunity for carrying out my intentions without running any serious risks." ‡

From that moment, Austria unmasks her designs.

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 119.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 242.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 258.

In accordance with a secret agreement concluded with the Russian Government, the Austrian armies, hitherto allied to the French, leave Warsaw and evacuate Polish territory. Notwithstanding the orders given by Napoleon to Schwarzenberg, the Austrian General ceases all hostilities, and falls back on Cracow. That city is even surrendered to the Russians by Metternich, who recalls all the Austrian troops, in spite of the efforts of Poniatowski, who, in order to postpone this fatal *dénouement*, disputes each day and hour with the impatient hostility of the Austrians.

I allude now to the events of Dresden in 1813. In my opinion, they constituted the culminating point, the capital incident which decided the fate of France and that of her Emperor. The part played by Metternich at that time comes out into the full light. The fall of Napoleon was rendered irrevocable, not by the fatal war in Spain, nor yet by the disastrous campaign in Russia, but by the attitude of Austria, which, after being our ally, became neutral and afterwards hostile, and thus let loose against us three hundred thousand more enemies. After the victories of Lutzen and Bautzen, thanks to

the heroism of our young recruits and to the learned tactics of Napoleon, fortune had returned to our flag; everything might still have been set right; Austria alone ruined everything—with how much duplicity we shall see.

On May 30, 1813, Count Bubna congratulated the Emperor upon his magnanimous desire for the peace of the world; he assured him that Austria would never forget that the first negotiations proceeded from him, whereas his recent victories might have induced him to place all his trust in the fate of arms.

The Emperor, depending on the treaty of March 14, 1812, according to which Austria guaranteed the integrity of the French Empire, never suspecting the Austrian army, and fully believing in the sincerity of the sentiments expressed by Count Bubna, signed, on June 4, the armistice of Dresden, which saved the Russo-Prussian armies from impending destruction. Napoleon has been reproached for that armistice as for a fault. It would, doubtless, have been a military mistake had Napoleon been certain of Austria's treachery. Of course, the French reserves were coming, and the armistice gave

the Emperor time for training his raw recruits, and for organizing and strengthening his army; but Austria derived far more advantage than did Napoleon from a suspension of hostilities. She still had to complete her army, which was in Bohemia under the command of Schwarzenberg, and she still required time in order to delude the conqueror, to secure subsidies from England, and to sign her own adhesion to the coalition.

Napoleon wanted the armistice as a step in the direction of peace. "If we did not wish for peace," he wrote on the very day of the conclusion of the armistice, "we should not be so foolish as to treat of an armistice under the present circumstances." * Austria, on the contrary, was anxious to obtain a suspension of hostilities in order to prepare for war. "After Bautzen," so writes Prince Metternich in his *Memoirs*, "it became important to check Napoleon in his onward progress." †

Up to June 26, 1813, Prince Metternich had

* *Correspondance de Napoleon Ier.*, June 4, 1813, Appendix, 20,083.

† *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. pp. 139, 149.

not interfered. He had gone to Opocno in order to conclude a secret convention by which Austria, whilst offering her mediation to Napoleon, bound herself beforehand to join her arms to those of Russia and Prussia. That treaty was signed on June 27, at Reichenbach, at the very moment when M. de Metternich, after having arranged everything in view of his joining the coalition, was negotiating with Napoleon the acceptance of what he termed the impartial mediation of Austria. That treaty was never made public by the contracting Powers, but its existence can no longer be contested. M. de Metternich himself alludes to it in the documents appended to his *Memoirs*.*

M. Thiers does not speak of the Convention of Reichenbach. He supposes that the Austrian Government, having entered into negotiations with Napoleon, was discussing them with him in good faith, and without having previously bound itself to any other Power. Such, however, was not the case. Being firmly resolved to fight or to humble France, Austria was actually concluding treaties

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. ii. p. 465.

with the enemies of the Emperor, whilst she carried on her dilatory negotiations with the latter. The omission relative to the treaty of Reichenbach renders the diplomatic narrative of M. Thiers inaccurate, and deprives his comments on the negotiations of 1813 of all historical value. Such ignorance of so important a point of fact, emanating from a historian like M. Thiers, will perhaps cause some surprise. This surprise will, however, vanish when it is known that the relation of the events of 1814 was framed *upon indications furnished by M. de Metternich.** The Austrian statesman did not think it advisable to communicate to M. Thiers a treaty which was intended to remain secret and which bore witness to the duplicity of Austria: as for M. Thiers, he blindly trusted the false confidences of the Austrian Minister.

In the Appendix will be found the full text of the Convention of Reichenbach. From this it appears that, on June 27, 1813, Austria "*bound herself to declare war against France and to join her arms to those*

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 255; Thiers, *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, vol. xvi. p. 73.

of Russia and Prussia, if, before July 20 of the same year, France did not accept the terms of the coalition." At first sight, this might appear to have been but a conditional treaty, subjected to the issue of a subsequent arrangement; but it will be seen—and that is why I insist on this point of history—that, in Metternich's mind, it was a treaty complete in itself, and that, feeling himself master of the negotiation which was to follow, he had, beforehand, prejudged and decided its issues.

After numerous delays, Metternich reached Dresden on June 25, 1813. He saw Napoleon on the following day. This important date is undoubtedly correct. M. Thiers wrongly gives it as June 28. Baron Fain also makes a mistake when he mentions June 23 as the date of the interview. His error proceeds from the fact that Metternich, who was to start on June 22, only started on the 24th. On June 24, Metternich left Gitschin, the head-quarters of the Emperor of Austria, and reached Dresden on the following day, June 25. Napoleon was absent when he arrived; it was only the next day, June 26, that he was invited to call on the Emperor, at the Marcolini Palace. The

exactitude of these dates cannot be contested, for they agree entirely with the indications contained in the report which, on the very evening of the day of his conversation with Napoleon, Metternich addressed to the Emperor Francis, and which is headed as follows: "Dresden, June 26, 1813, nine o'clock p.m." *

In what frame of mind did Metternich arrive at Dresden? His confession is as complete as may be desired. It is impossible to expose oneself more fully:—

"To pass from neutrality to war will only be possible by armed mediation.† We must apply ourselves uninterruptedly to arming ourselves, and holding ourselves in readiness to wage war. ‡

"The greatest demoralisation reigned in the Russian army; its only wish was to retire within its own frontiers. . . . I was convinced that, in case we went to war, the loss of a single battle would compromise everything.§

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. ii. p. 461.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 125.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 128.
§ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 139, 140.

"However, it was easy to foresee that, after the victory of Bautzen, he (Napoleon) would be more inclined to come to terms (such was indeed the case). According to his usual system, he entered into direct communication with the sovereigns."*

But the following is more serious still. Napoleon might be moderate, but all in vain. Metternich did not wish him to be so. In that lay the difficulty of the situation. The whole truth is summed up in that:

"'What will become of our cause,' inquired the Czar of me, 'if Napoleon should accept (the mediation of Austria)?' '*If he should decline it*,' I replied, 'the armistice will cease as a matter of course, and you will find us in the ranks of your allies. *If he should accept it, the negotiations will prove* . . . that Napoleon does not wish to be either wise or just, and the result will be *the same.* In any case, we shall thus have obtained the time we required . . . and we shall be able, in our turn, to assume the offensive.'"† These words, so convincing

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 141.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 144.

and so clear, disclose the whole of Metternich's scheme.

There exist two versions of the interview between Napoleon and Metternich at Dresden. In the Appendix I reproduce that of Napoleon. It is full of fire and life, and bears throughout the impress of truth. It closes with the following impressive words from the Emperor:—"You have come to meet me because you believe yourself in a position to dictate the law to me! The law, indeed! And why, pray, do you wish to dictate it only to me? Am I no longer the same man whom you were defending yesterday? If you are really a mediator, why do you not at least hold the balance even?" Thus is Metternich's conduct unmasked, and yet Napoleon, when parting with his visitor, takes care to inform him that he is still disposed to negotiate.

The account of the same interview, as related by Metternich, is much longer and more diffuse; in it the Austrian Minister naturally assigns to himself the most honourable part.

As for M. Thiers, he is not satisfied with the narrative of either Napoleon or Metternich, and gives an absolutely fanciful account of it. He ascribes

special parts to each, and speaks of offensive expressions whilst confessing that Metternich always denied them.* It is a curious presumption on the part of M. Thiers to doubt the statements of both Napoleon and Metternich, and to assert the correctness of words which, forty years after the event, he places on the lips of two persons whose conversation had no other hearers than themselves.

It is not difficult to unravel the truth. With his shrewd mind, Napoleon wanted a longer armistice; he admitted the neutrality and mediation of Austria, but looked for some prospective basis of a durable peace. Metternich evaded the latter point; he urged the necessity of the acceptance, pure and simple, of an armed mediation, with an armistice as short as possible; and when he allowed himself to be brought to discuss the terms of peace, his insinuations appeared to Napoleon actually insulting. The almost avowed surrender of Italy, and of all direct or indirect influence of France on the right bank of the Rhine, were not sufficient. Metternich insinuated besides that though Austria would be quite satisfied

* Thiers, *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, vol. xvi. p. 67.

to treat on this basis. England might exact something else, and wish to have, for instance, a footing in Holland, perhaps even in Belgium.

Such a peace would have been crushing. Napoleon was willing to surrender Illyria to Austria, and that was not the last concession for which he was prepared. But just as Napoleon gives way, Metternich advances: and, whilst declining to him himself, discloses ever-growing demands. The news of the loss of the battle of Vittoria by the French had just become known, and it afforded a new argument in support of Metternich's claims.

What are we to conclude from all this? That, at Dresden, Napoleon did not refuse to make peace, but that, on the contrary, he proposed it, that he sincerely wished for it, and that he was unable to secure it, as he himself so often said.

Being unable to arrange as to the terms of peace, an armistice was concluded, with the understanding that a congress should be held at Prague. But the concessions of Napoleon hampered Austria. What was to become of the treaty of Reichenbach with Russia and Prussia if those concessions were sincere? Thus, whilst signing the prolongation of the armis-

tice, Metternich was still following his own end. He had despatched a messenger to Schwarzenberg. In his message to the commander-in-chief of the Austrian army, he inquired "whether it would not be desirable to gain a few weeks in order to complete our order of battle."* "Within twenty days," replied the Prince, "my army shall be reinforced by seventy-five thousand men. I should be glad to obtain that delay, but a single day more would place me in an awkward position." "From that moment," adds M. de Metternich, "all my efforts tended to obtain those twenty days."†

In the meantime, the Emperor, in his haste to secure the successful issue of the negotiations, sent Bassano in quest of Metternich. A second and final interview took place on June 30. Napoleon accepted the mediation of Austria and desired Metternich to formulate the proposals for the same as he understood it. The following is the text of the armistice:—

1. The Emperor of the French accepts the armed mediation of the Emperor of Austria.

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i., p. 155.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 155.

2. On July 10 the plenipotentiaries shall meet at Prague.
3. August 10 is appointed as the last day of the negotiations.
4. All military operations shall cease, and shall not be resumed before the last-mentioned date.

"Never," says Metternich, "was such important business transacted more rapidly."*

The intentions of Napoleon are plain ; he acknowledges the force of events and surrenders the treaty of mutual guarantees with Austria, to replace it by the armed mediation of the latter. It was a great sacrifice! Was it a mistake?

After the interview of Dresden, Metternich forwarded to his Sovereign a report, dated from Brandeis, July 12, 1813. In it, he develops the idea of an armed mediation, such as he conceives it: he speaks of it as likely to become before long an alliance with the other Powers, and as a promise to join in the war. Before going to Prague, and out of mistrust towards his sovereign, he writes

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. pp. 156–157.

to him, in order to bind him: "May I reckon on your Majesty's energy, in case Napoleon should decline the conditions proposed by us? Is your Majesty thoroughly resolved to entrust to the arms of Austria and of all the other members of the Coalition the care of ensuring the triumph of the good cause? Your reply to this question will form the very basis of my instructions. Should Your Majesty's mind be not fully made up, all the measures I should take in Prague would bear the stamp of unpardonable ambiguity. As for me, notwithstanding my devotion to the welfare of the State, I should only be the sad instrument of the ruin of all the political consideration we enjoy."*

The Emperor Francis acquiesced, although with a few restrictions; for he was not so full of hatred as his Minister.

The plenipotentiaries at last met at Prague. Napoleon, though disposed by the dictates of reason to make grievous sacrifices, but as yet full of indomitable energy, still retained some confidence; and, being justly anxious as to the kind of welcome the

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. ii. p. 467.

French people would extend to their Emperor, if he should allow himself to be humbled, he alternately gave way to pacific and to warlike moods.

The negotiations of Prague were not carried out in earnest. The allied Powers were bound by the Treaty of Reichenbach. M. de Metternich seized every opportunity of delay ; he put off the opening of the Congress from the 5th of July to the 8th. On account of some difficulty having arisen with regard to the full powers of the French plenipotentiaries, the meeting was again adjourned from July 8 to July 12. The second Plenipotentiary, Count de Narbonne, was refused admittance and sent away because M. de Caulaincourt* was twenty-four hours late; and when, on the same day, the latter arrived, he was told that it was too late. Metternich adds: "I put the finishing touch to the Emperor's message. In the night between August 10 and August 11, at midnight punctually, I sent off the copies of that document. At the same time I gave orders to light up the signals which were held in readiness from Prague to the

* The first French plenipotentiary.

Silesian frontier, in order to announce the failure of the negotiations and inform the allied armies that they could cross the frontier of Bohemia."*

That declaration was indeed sent off between the 10th and the 11th of August, although hostilities were not actually resumed before the 16th.

M. de Metternich was impatiently waiting for midnight. The declaration of war by Austria was the crowning of all his policy. According to M. Thiers, on August 11, Metternich displayed unmistakeable signs of anxiety. In his *Memoirs*, the Austrian Chancellor gives way, on the contrary, to the satisfaction of a statesman who has reached his object. Metternich—from whom the French historian derived his information — deceived M. Thiers, as he had previously deceived Napoleon.

From that moment everything was irremediably lost. The victory of Dresden was rendered useless by the defeats of the Emperor's lieutenants. Had Napoleon been victorious even at Leipzig, it would probably not have seriously modified the situation. The Russian reserves were coming up in compact

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 159.

masses, and Austria was ready. In order to win Prince Schwarzenberg over still further, the Allies appointed him Generalissimo of their troops; he was selected by the Coalition more on account of his nationality* than of his military aptitude.

The close of the year 1813 offers the spectacle of all Europe arrayed against one man. All sorts of traitors met in the camp of the Allies. First of all appeared Bernadotte,† who cherished personal claims to the crown of France. "There can be no doubt about it," says M. de Metternich; after which he adds this curious detail: "Count Pozzo di Borgo acted as Russian commissioner, with Bernadotte, who, speaking of France, said to the former, 'France will belong to the most worthy!' 'Good Heavens!' replied Pozzo, 'then France is mine!' The Prince Royal of Sweden did not reply." ‡

Then came Moreau,§ whom fate had destined to

* Charles Philippe, Prince of Schwarzenberg, born in Vienna, April 15, 1771.

† A French general who deserted Napoleon, and became King of Sweden, under the name of Charles John, in 1818.

‡ *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 167.

§ A French general who deserted his flag and joined the Russians.

be killed by a cannon-shot before Dresden. Alexander wished to appoint him Generalissimo, and, on seeing him dead, he exclaimed, "God's decrees were against him!"

Jomini,* whom Metternich himself calls a deserter, also went over to the enemy. M. Thiers is full of forbearance towards that Jomini who, but the day before, was still chief of the staff of Marshal Ney, and who passed over to the enemy, and induced the Allies to attack Dresden.

Germany was freed from the Napoleonic preponderance. "The object of the war of 1813 was secured," says M. de Metternich; "Napoleon was driven to the other side of the Rhine." †

Would the Allies rest satisfied with that result? They should, if they were sincere; but M. de Metternich was not. Hesitation was reigning in the army of the Coalition. The Emperor of Russia was liberally inclined. The Emperor of Austria was the father-in-law of Napoleon, and believed in the sincerity of his

* A French general, author of a much-esteemed work on military tactics.

† *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 172.

pacific intentions.* Metternich stepped forth; he was animated by the same passions as Blücher, who dreamed of the destruction and looting of Paris. Though his animosity against France and Napoleon was less fierce than that of the Prussian, it was quite as deep-seated; in the ruin of the Emperor and of the Empire, he displayed the fanaticism of a feudal lord, and the obstinacy of a diplomatist of the old *régime*. He prevailed upon the Allies to cross the Rhine, thus violating Swiss neutrality, and "to carry war to the heart of France," well aware that, by so doing, they "would deal a decisive blow at the existence of Napoleon."†

At Mannheim there was only the semblance of a Congress. According to Metternich's own confession, the all-important point was to deceive the mind of the French public, to "hold out a bait" ‡ to it which might entrap France, and deliver her defenceless into the hands of the invaders. "With the object of still further isolating Napoleon, and of

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 174.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 172.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 173.

bringing, at the same time, a certain pressure to bear upon the spirit of the French army," says Metternich, "I suggested the idea of the natural frontiers of France, and offered to negotiate at once on that basis." *

Metternich was then afraid lest Napoleon should suddenly make up his mind and accept his proposal. Napoleon was anxious to treat; but, for Metternich, no condition was "acceptable" unless it carried with it the breaking up of France and the overthrow of the Emperor. Care was taken to cause the negotiations to drag on. "The three Courts† replied with calmness and decision to the overtures of Napoleon, but they declined beforehand all proposals tending to obtain a suspension of the military operations." ‡

What is the value of negotiations in the course of which hostilities are continued? How can they be serious, when daily modified by the military outlook?

The Congress of Châtillon was only the continua-

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 173.
† Austria, Russia, and Prussia.
‡ *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 173.

tion of the dilatory negotiations of Prague and of Mannheim. The terms hinted at, rather than proposed by the Allies steadily increased in harshness. Not only was the breaking up of France decided beforehand, but the overthrow of Napoleon was agreed upon. That confession is also to be found in the *Memoirs of Prince Metternich.* "The restoration of the Bourbons and the limitation of France to her former frontiers seemed the only possible solution to the Emperor Francis and to his Cabinet. The views of Austria were in complete harmony with those of the British Government concerning that fundamental point." *

At Langres, Metternich had a very sharp explanation with the Emperor Alexander. He displayed intense ardour in persuading him to consent to the overthrow of Napoleon. Alexander had formed various projects; M. de Metternich rejected them all and listened to nothing but the return of the Bourbons: "The moment my Sovereign should grow weak, I should immediately place my resignation at his feet. . . . The only acceptable combination

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich,* vol. i. p. 188.

is the return of the Bourbons, regaining possession of their indisputable rights ; the Emperor Francis will never come to any understanding with any Government but theirs. . . . I was authorized," adds Metternich, "to go so far as to threaten the immediate retreat of the Austrian army." *

The Emperor of Russia was desirous that France should be consulted about her new Government. M. de Metternich was opposed to that wish. What necessity was there for sounding the will of the nation? "The legitimate King is here." †

The hostility of Russia towards France was not implacable, it was doubtful. The mind of Alexander was undecided as to whom he should select to be the new Sovereign ; he had no faith in the Bourbons ; M. de Vitrolles has related the difficulties he met with when endeavouring to induce the Czar to give them his aid. Numerous were the candidates for the crown of France and they all laid their claims before the Emperor of Russia. Those pretenders were Bernadotte, the Prince of Orange—aide-de-camp to Wellington in Spain, who had displayed

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 186.

† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 186.

some military ability—and the Duke of Orleans, who would not have been sorry to supplant the elder branch of his family, and who already cherished the project realised in 1830 ; Talleyrand, Fouché, and other former imperial functionaries were favourable to the latter.

As for Prussia, she brought her spirit of vengeance to bear against France even more than against Napoleon; she did not mind who was to be the sovereign, but was anxious to see the country completely dismembered.

In the midst of those intrigues, Metternich and England caused the scale to fall in favour of the Bourbons. Henceforth there was nothing to stop the Allies from prosecuting their march onward.

Whilst Metternich was busily engaged with the allied sovereigns, military events progressed with startling rapidity. Napoleon tried to execute his flank movement towards Saint Dizier. In spite of the efforts of Mortier* and of Marmont,† Paris did

* Marshal Mortier, Duke of Trevise, was killed by the explosion of Fieschi's infernal machine, July 28, 1835.

† Marshal Marmont, Duke of Ragusa, betrayed Napoleon by coming to terms with the Allies and surrendering Paris.

not hold out during the two days which might have enabled the Emperor to return there; he had only reached Fontainebleau when the news of the capitulation reached him. The Empress Marie-Louise and the members of the Government left the capital, which fell into the hands of the foreigners. The defection of Marmont dealt the finishing blow to the Emperor. Marshals Ney and Macdonald * called upon the Emperor Alexander with Caulaincourt in order to inform him that Napoleon was ready to abdicate, and handed to him the act of abdication, written at Fontainebleau, and bearing the following words: "The Allies having declared that the Emperor is the sole obstacle to peace, he abdicates in order to secure better terms for France."

Not wishing to take advantage of his victory so far as to make Napoleon a State prisoner, Alexander

* Jacques Etienne Joseph Alexandre Macdonald, Duke of Tarenta, Marshal and Peer of France, born at Sancerre. He was descended from a Scotch family which followed the Stuarts to France. He defeated the Duke of York at Valenciennes and powerfully contributed to the victory of Wagram, in recognition of which he was appointed Marshal of France on the battle-field, and created Duke of Tarenta by Napoleon after the latter's return to Paris.

arranged with the Marshals the stipulations of the Treaty of Fontainebleau, whereby Napoleon was appointed sovereign of the island of Elba.

Metternich reached Paris on April 10, and being informed of Alexander's promises, censured them and strenuously objected to the treaty which had not yet been ratified. He did not consider the abdication as a sufficient guarantee; Austria would not hear of the island of Elba being given to Napoleon; that rock "is not distant enough."* "Napoleon is too near France and Europe." † Even in 1814, Metternich contemplated St. Helena, although that statesman — the most implacable amongst the members of the Coalition—was the Minister of the Emperor Francis, whose daughter had married Napoleon!

Everything was over for Napoleon as an emperor; but the animus of Metternich towards him was planning other bitter trials for him as a man. Marie-Louise, whose mind failed to rise to the height of her fortune, was in Orleans. The Austrian

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich*, vol. i. p. 195.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 473. (Letter from the Emperor Francis to Metternich.)

troops brought her back to Blois, with the King of Rome, her son. Austria was opposed to her joining her consort. She was sent to Schönbrunn, near Vienna, and kept there in strict seclusion, as though she had allowed herself to be mixed up in some unpleasant undertaking.

The Bonapartes were divided, like a herd of cattle, amongst the enemies of France. All the French attendants who had followed the Empress were ordered to leave Schönbrunn; the governess of the young prince also had to leave him.*

After the return from Elba, in 1815, a letter is extorted from Marie-Louise declaring that she is foreign, and opposed to the return of Napoleon to France. The Emperor Francis alters his grandson's names and titles: instead of King of Rome, he makes him Duke of Reichstadt, and instead of Napoleon, the child's name is changed to that of Francis. Out of charity, Marie-Louise is appointed to the sovereignty of Parma for her life-

* The wife of Count Montesquion-Fezensac, High Chamberlain to the Emperor Napoleon, and daughter of the Marquis Le Tellier de Courtanvaux.

time, with the distinct understanding that her son shall not inherit her rights. She does not reply to the letters Napoleon writes to her from Elba. Metternich appoints General Neipperg—the same who had been sent to Bernadotte and to Murat, in order to negotiate their defection, and who had failed on a similar mission, to Prince Eugène, in Milan—to be grand-master of her household. It was a most suitable choice, for the part the general had now to play was no longer a political one. A left-handed marriage took place between Count Neipperg and Marie-Louise. Austria acknowledged this marriage, declared the issue legitimate children, and gave them the title of Count and Countess of Montenuovo. That is how the Emperor Francis and Prince Metternich acted whilst Napoleon was lingering in anguish at St. Helena.

I only saw Marie-Louise once; it was in 1836, on the high road close to Parma. I was with my father. I did not know her, but King Jérôme * suddenly seized hold of my hand, and, with poignant emotion, said to me: "That is the Empress Marie-

* Of Westphalia.

Louise!" . . . And, correcting himself, he added almost immediately: "No, she is no longer the Empress, she is Madame Neipperg."

Such are the trials to which Austrian policy, personified by Metternich, subjected my family.

Even this, however, was not held sufficient. Napoleon was overthrown, Marie-Louise had married again. There remained the King of Rome, or rather Francis, Duke of Reichstadt. After 1815, he was closely watched and not allowed to communicate with any Frenchman. He was, indeed, treated like a regular prisoner; whatever he did or said was repeated to Metternich, and nobody was admitted to visit the Prince without the Chancellor's permission. The unfortunate young man, who had been brought up with Austrian views, was anxious to learn the history of his father, and, in order to gratify his legitimate curiosity, he was obliged, after 1830, to question Don Miguel and Marmont, whilst playing a game of billiards with them. Indeed, that very Marmont who had betrayed the father, became the instructor and the confidant of the son. Finally the Duke of Reichstadt, who might yet have proved a source

of danger,* died prematurely in Vienna: † a most opportune death, it must be confessed, occurring as it did at a time when Napoleonic recollections were being revived in our country.

I have portrayed Metternich.

I do not wish anyone to be misled as to the nature of the blame I impute to him. It is incontestable that an Austrian subject, an Austrian Minister, owes his person to his country, to his sovereign, and to the higher interests of both. I do not find fault with him for having opposed Napoleon's policy in so far as it was contrary to Austrian policy, but for having displayed, in the conduct of the affairs of Austria, a spirit of systematic hostility towards France, as also constant duplicity towards the great man of whom he affected to be the courtier and almost the friend.

My chief object is to expose the revolting unfairness—when judging Napoleon, his character and the part he played—of appealing to the recollections of a Foreign Minister who, in order

* To Austrian policy.
† July 22, 1832.

to enhance the depth of his views, is constrained, when writing his *Mémoires*, to disclose in cold blood the scheme he devised against France and the Emperor, and which he carried out with unfaltering perseverance.

BOURRIENNE.

THE publication of the *Mémoires de Bourrienne* caused some stir and stimulated the curiosity of the public. These *Mémoires* were brought out on the eve of the Revolution of 1830. The name of their author and the intimate duties he had so long discharged with Napoleon, imparted peculiar value and special importance to these recollections. At first, people did not try to ascertain what reason induced Bourrienne to write this work; they did not even trouble themselves to know in what disposition of mind and in the midst of what political surroundings he had composed it. The work was devoted to Napoleon, who seemed to live again in its pages. That was enough to secure numerous readers for the *Mémoires de Bourrienne.*

But men, faithful to their opinions and to

their past, who had been mixed up personally with the events related by Bourrienne, soon found out that history was, almost in all cases, distorted, and often shamefully falsified by him. They justly suspected the memory and honesty of the writer. They even endeavoured to convince themselves—so hateful did the work appear to them—that the former confidant of the First Consul was not the real author of the book, and that he had entrusted its execution to some faithless secretary. With time that opinion gained credit. The authenticity of the *Mémoires de Bourrienne* was even doubted. They are now ascribed to Villemarest.

This Villemarest was an insignificant writer, whom the Restoration had not saved from impecuniosity. He avenged himself by taking advantage of the interest awakened in the public towards the men and the incidents of the Revolution and of the Empire. He thus published in turn the *Mémoires de Constant*, the Emperor's valet, those of a *page*, and those of *Brissot-Warwille.** It seems

* Jean Pierre, a member of the Convention, and one of the most talented writers of the Revolution. He was also a distinguished jurist, and wrote several essays on criminal juris-

beyond doubt that he himself, or some one of his fellows, contributed to the *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, and possibly edited them altogether, which, indeed, matters little. Whatever may have been the hand which held the pen, Bourrienne remains, nevertheless, the man who suggested and inspired the *Mémoires*, and, therefore, the responsible author of the ten volumes devoted to defaming the acts and the thoughts of Napoleon.

What may have been Bourrienne's object? If, of all hypotheses, we admit the one most favourable to the author, he doubtless met with difficulties at different periods of his existence, and could not resist the temptation of speculating on an illustrious name and on the relations which had existed between himself and its bearer; but that still

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prudence, the most esteemed of which is entitled *Théorie des lois Criminelles*. As a statesman, he powerfully contributed to the declaration of war with England and Holland. Camille Desmoulins was his irreconcilable enemy. Brissot, having been accused of federalism, the revolutionary tribunal issued a warrant against him. He was arrested at Moulins, brought back to Paris, tried, sentenced to death, and guillotined October 31, 1793.

fails to explain how he came to misrepresent Bonaparte's intentions, and to distort the facts which he witnessed.

To judge of his work, we must know the man. We shall see that Bourrienne's morality justifies all conjectures.

Fauvelet de Charbonnière de Bourrienne had been the companion of Bonaparte at the school of Brienne.* He was born, like him, in 1769. He himself says that this similarity of age was "another reason for their union and friendship." With the effusion of his young and unsuspecting soul, Napoleon fully trusted that friendship, which Bourrienne betrayed so shamefully later on. It grew closer through the dreadful ordeals of the Revolution. It was so deep-seated with the general-in-chief of the army of Italy that it increased with his successes. After Arcola,† Bonaparte repeatedly shared his joys

* Brienne-le-Château, in the department of Aude, was the seat of a royal military academy where Bonaparte studied for the army. There, January 29, 1814, the French defeated the Allies.

† An Italian village, close to Verona, famous for the victory of Bonaparte over the Austrians in 1796 (November 15).

and his glory with the former companion of his youth. Bourrienne's name had been entered on the list of the *émigrés* since 1793, and was erased only in 1797. This circumstance did not prevent Bonaparte from placing his friend at the head of his Cabinet, a position which Bourrienne filled until 1802. During the whole of that time he was the confidant of Bonaparte's thoughts, the witness of the outpourings of his soul, in fact, the friend of the house.

To what use did the former *émigré* turn the trust reposed in him? He took advantage of it to abstract Cabinet documents, to divulge State secrets, and to pry into family matters. His life was occupied with idle gossip, spying, dishonest dealings, worthless and even criminal speculations. Later on, although full light had been brought to bear on his real character, the Emperor, who was full of inexhaustible indulgence towards his old friend, appointed him to an important diplomatic post. Bourrienne is seen afterwards conspiring with the Royalists against his benefactor, whom he abandons at the hour of danger. In 1814, he again appears on the political scene as postmaster-general and as pre-

fect of police; and, after the return from Ghent,* as Minister of State to Louis XVIII.

There exist numerous proofs of the infidelity, improbity, venality, and treachery of Bourrienne; he scatters them himself on every page of his *Mémoires*.

For instance, he exposes to the public a letter from Madame Bacciochi to her brother, signed Christine Bonaparte.† The name of Napoleon's sister was not Christine, and Joseph ‡ denies that she ever wrote the letter.§ This letter is either forged and the impudence of the so-called historian is flagrant, or it was intercepted by him; in the latter case, what is to be thought of a secretary who intercepts family letters, in order to publish them, after the fall of the man whom he served?

In the (St. Helena) *Memorial*, Napoleon alludes to the letters which passed between him and Louis XVIII.; with reference to those letters Bourrienne

* Where Louis XVIII. had fled, after the return from Elba.

† *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol. i. p. 292.

‡ King of Spain and eldest brother of Napoleon I.

§ *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. i. p. 240.

writes : "I am obliged to quote a few lines from them, that I may be able to point out the difference existing between them and the *autograph letters which I preserved.*" *

Elsewhere, he speaks of a letter from Desaix to the First Consul, "which he carefully preserved" †—in another passage, he makes reference to a letter from Lucien ‡ to Joseph "which he found in his own papers." § Joseph declares that he never received that letter. ‖ If the latter is genuine how came it that M. de Bourrienne abstained from sending it to its destination ? If forged, how did he dare to publish it ?

These few instances enable us to appreciate the fidelity of this strange secretary. His probity is not worth much more. Bourrienne tries to explain the motive which led Napoleon to part with him. He confesses that it was a monetary transaction, a speculation in stocks and shares. The Duke of

* *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol iv. p. 72.
† *Ibid.*, vol iv. p. 172.
‡ Prince of Canino, second brother of Napoleon I.
§ *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol. iv. p. 164.
‖ *Bourrienne et ses erréurs*, vol. i. p. 268.

Rovigo,* who was favourably disposed towards Bourrienne, mentions the fact in his *Mémoires.*

"He was watched," writes the Duke, "and it was ascertained that he indulged in financial speculations. The imputation became easy. He was accused of *peculation*; it was attacking him in his weak point. . . . The First Consul detested nothing so much as illegitimate means of acquiring gold." †

A still graver suspicion rested upon him; there was a talk of a regular theft, a deficit of a hundred thousand francs ‡ in the Treasury of the Admiralty. The fact is that, on various occasions, Napoleon required from Bourrienne important restitutions, amounting in the aggregate to a sum of several millions,§ which he was unable to refund. Not until he had obtained undeniable evidence of Bourrienne's guilt, did Napoleon resolve to dismiss the man whom he still had present to his mind through

* General Savary succeeded Fouché as Minister of Police.

† *Mémoires du duc de Rovigo*, vol. i. p. 419.

‡ About £4,000 sterling.

§ Of francs.

reminiscences of youth, and whose quickness at work he fully valued.

Joseph relates that, one day, on returning from the country, he entered the study of the First Consul, where he found Bourrienne alone. The latter was awaiting Bonaparte's return, in order to secure his signature to several documents. Who would believe it? Bourrienne took advantage of that instant of *tête-à-tête* to inform Joseph of the great confidence placed in him by the head of the State, and ended by making overtures to him. These "overtures, which surprised quite as much as they wounded"* Bonaparte's brother, also related to money matters. Joseph disclosed to his brother the proposals of his secretary. A few moments afterwards, the First Consul, whilst conversing about this incident with Josephine,† said to her "If Bourrienne takes the liberty of making such insinuations to Joseph, whom he scarcely knows, what does he not say to you whom he sees every day?"—"Who does not

* *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. i. p. 274.

† Joséphine Tascher de la Pagerie, widow of General Viscount de Beauharnais—who died on the revolutionary scaffold—and first wife of Napoleon.

know Bourrienne?" replied Josephine. "The First Consul is the only person who shuts his eyes to evidence." * After having related this conversation, King Joseph adds: "Some time afterwards, Bourrienne having been watched, the First Consul was made thoroughly acquainted with his dealings; he, however, was satisfied with dismissing him from his presence, being unwilling *to ruin* a man with whom he had been so long on intimate terms." †

The disgrace of Bourrienne lasted three years, during which time he was subjected to a regular police supervision. In 1805, Napoleon forgave him, and sent him to fill the position of French chargé d'affaires to the Hanse towns.

The Continental blockade offered a large field of action to the stock-jobbing instincts of the former disgraced Secretary, who again gave way to his dishonest inclinations, and was accused of selling on his own account licenses to carry on colonial trading. Under the date of September 2, 1810, Napoleon

* *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. i. p. 247.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 274.

wrote as follows to Marshal Davoust,* Commander-in-Chief of the Army in Germany:—

"My Cousin,—I pray you to take the necessary steps to acquaint me with what is going on at Hamburg, and especially with the conduct of Bourrienne, who is accused of making a large fortune by infringing my orders."†

Bourrienne was recalled, and the Emperor, in another letter to the same Marshal, dated January 1, 1811, is still more explicit:—

"My Cousin,—I am informed that Bourrienne has unlawfully obtained seven or eight millions in Hamburg, by granting licences or exacting arbitrary fees."‡

General Compans, Chief of the General Staff, who was Acting Commander-in-Chief at the time, replied as follows to the Emperor:—

"The general opinion is that M. de Bourrienne

* This is wrongly spelt. Davoust was a French general who followed Bonaparte to Egypt, where he was killed; whereas the family name of the Marshal Prince d'Eckmühl was Davout, without the *s*.

† *Correspondance de Napoléon I^er^*, vol. xxi. p. 99, Appendix No. 16,859, edition of the Imperial Library.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. xxi. p. 407, Appendix 17,258.

made an enormous fortune in Hamburg . . . that it would be difficult to ascertain its figure judicially . . . that, in order to form some idea, it would be necessary to know how much he was authorized to charge as consular fees on passports or on *certificats d'origine**; but even this would not be sufficient, seeing that the position of M. de Bourrienne, and the influence he possessed in the country over all commercial transactions, enabled him to gratify his cupidity by many other means . . . that, at any rate, all his friends, as well as those who are indifferent towards him, unanimously agree as to his having made there a considerable fortune."†

Bourrienne's interested complaisance in Hamburg amounted not simply to cupidity, but even to treason. For, as the Emperor said, "To receive money there was just as wrong as receiving it in the presence of the enemy."‡

The fact is that Bourrienne was guilty of every

* A signed declaration made on oath before Consuls by owners of cargoes, to the effect that the cargo was grown or manufactured in this or that country.

† *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. ii. p. 325.

‡ *Lettre de l'Empereur à Davoust* (read Davout), September 2, 1810.

kind of treason. The relations which existed between the Imperial representative and the *émigrés* of Hamburg and of Altona are no secret to anybody. He relates in his *Memoirs* that, notwithstanding contrary and very severe orders which he had received,* he tolerated the presence of M. Hue, former valet to Louis XVI., to whom he communicated the instructions given him respecting that person, and that he told him that there was no need for him to be anxious, and that he might stay in town, "provided he were cautious in the steps he took."†

But what is the use of proving Bourrienne's treason? He was paid for it. Was it *for nothing* that the Emperor Alexander, *motu proprio*, without the intervention of the provisional Government, appointed him Postmaster-General at the time of the entrance of the allied armies in Paris?

Not only does Bourrienne acknowledge the part he took in the return of the Bourbons, but he boasts of it. "Being convinced," says he, in the first chapter of his last volume, "that the fall of Napoleon was inevitable, I considered that the first duty of a

* *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol. viii. p. 51.

† *Ibid.*, vol. viii. p. 82.

citizen was towards his country; all my wishes, all my projects, were therefore directed towards the establishment of a wise and moderate Government, offering some chance of duration. *Some services from me* may also, perhaps, have contributed to further the fulfilment of my wishes."* Elsewhere, Bourrienne mentions with cynical complacency those words of Louis XVIII., so crushing to himself, "Ah, Monsieur de Bourrienne, I am very happy to see you. *I am aware of the services you did to our cause in Hamburg and in Paris.* I shall be pleased to prove my gratitude to you."†

Napoleon was alluding to Bourrienne when he said at St. Helena: "A certain person was in my intimate employ. I was very fond of him, but I was obliged to turn him out, because I caught him several times *la main dans le sac*,‡ and he used to rob with too much impudence. If you look at him you will find that he has *un œil de pie.*"§

* *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol. x. p. 5.

† *Ibid.*, vol. x. p. 241.

‡ Literally, "with his hand in the bag"; that is, in the act of committing some fraud.

§ Literally, "the eye of a magpie"; that is, the eye of a thief. It is well known that that bird has thieving propensities, or,

This is the man to whom frivolous or prejudiced writers thought fit to apply for the secrets of Napoleon's soul!

It is, therefore, important to examine whether the *Mémoires de Bourrienne* derive, from a certain accuracy in facts, the authority which the personality of their author cannot give them. These memoirs are refuted by the most eminent men: the Prince of Eckmühl,* the Duke of Cambacérès,† Boulay de la Meurthe,‡ General Belliard, &c. They are not even trusted by the implacable enemies of Napoleon, by Metternich or by Stein,§ who meet them with "blunt

rather, has been provided by nature with the instinct of laying by a stock of food, in obedience to which it will often purloin various things, chiefly bright and shiny articles.—*Mémorial de Saint-Héléne; Napoléon, ses opinions, ses jugements, etc.*, by Damas-Hinard, t. ii. p. 283.

* Marshal Davout.

† The Arch-Chancellor of the Empire and former Consul with Bonaparte and Lebrun.

‡ A French statesman and one of the authors of the *Code Civil.*

§ Henri Frederick Charles Baron von Stein, one of the most liberal and patriotic German statesmen. He was on several occasions at the head of the Prussian Cabinet, and his wise reforms powerfully contributed to the retrieval of Prussia's greatness. He was the sworn enemy of military despotism, and founded the famous *Tugendbund.*

and positive denial," and denounce them as being an "astute and insidious" production.*

Some of Bourrienne's contemporaries, indignant at his calumnies, devoted two volumes to pointing out the errors, the inconsistency, and the confusion which exist in his *Mémoires*. They are indeed numerous. He thus says that the Duke of Brunswick entered the service of Prussia in 1792,† whereas he was the veteran of the wars of the Great Frederic, and his most illustrious lieutenant. He states that General Sebastiani signed, in 1806,‡ the treaty with Turkey, whereas it was concluded in Paris, June 25, 1802, at the very time when Bourrienne still discharged the duties of Private Secretary to the First Consul. He pretends to have been present at Murat's marriage at the Palace of the Luxembourg, whereas that marriage was not celebrated in Paris, but at Plailly, in the Department of Oise.§ He speaks of Bernier, Bishop of Orleans, as being Bishop of Versailles;

* *Mémoires du Prince de Metternich.* Letter from Stein, January 25, 1830, vol. i. p. 267.

† *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol. vii. p. 160.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. vii. p. 144.

§ *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. i. p. 259.

according to him, Clarke* was, at the same time, Minister of War and Governor of Berlin.† He speaks of Joseph‡ as being already Ambassador to Rome, before the battle of Mondovi,§ that is, at a time when France was still unrepresented at the Holy See. He asserts that Lannes‖ could not accustom himself to say *you* when addressing the Emperor. He mistakes General Carra Saint Cyr¶

* Henri Jacques Guillaume Clarke, Count of Hunebourg and Duke of Feltre, Marshal of France, was descended of Irish parents. He was Secretary of the Duke of Orleans when he entered the army. In 1792, he was colonel of cavalry, and, owing to his talent and personal courage, he rapidly rose to be general of division. He became private secretary of Napoleon, whom he followed in all his campaigns, but after the return from Elba, he went to Ghent with Louis XVIII. Napoleon created him Duke of Feltre as a reward for the promptitude with which he repelled the unexpected attack of Lord Chatham on Walcheren.

† *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. i. p. 275.

‡ Napoleon's brother.

§ Town of Italy, famous by Bonaparte's victory in 1796.

‖ Duke of Montebello, Marshal of France, mortally wounded at the battle of Essling.

¶ Jean François Carra Saint-Cyr (Count of), served in the American War of Independence, returned to France, became Brigadier-General, powerfully contributed to the success of Marengo by the capture of Castel-Ceriolo. At the battle of Hohenlinden, Napoleon promoted him to the rank of General

for General Gouvion Saint Cyr,* which leads him to make the strangest statements. He speaks of an insignificant village, Werneck, as though it were an important stronghold. He transfers Vienna to the left bank of the Danube. I could go on for ever with the lengthy enumeration of his errors.

These foolish and random statements possess

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of Division, and appointed him in turn to be Governor of Dresden and of the Illyrian provinces. In 1817, Louis XVIII. entrusted him with the governorship of Guyane. His name is engraved on the *Arc de triomphe* with those of the most distinguished officers of the Grand Army.

* Laurent Gouvion St. Cyr, born at Toul, dévoted himself to painting, to study which he went to Rome. The events of the Revolution, however, pointed out to him his real avocation. He took service as Captain of volunteers, became Brigadier-General and General of Division, took an active part in the siege of Mayence, fought in all the campaigns of Napoleon, whom he followed to Russia. In 1812, he defeated Wittgenstein at the battle of Polotsk, in acknowledgment of which Napoleon created him Marshal of France. After the retreat of 1813, he was entrusted with the defence of Dresden, but was obliged to capitulate for want of food. He remained a prisoner until the Restoration, and was elevated to the peerage by Louis XVIII. with the title of Marquis, and entrusted with the portfolio of Minister of War, and soon after of Minister of Marine. Whilst Minister of War he completely reorganized the army—one of the best acts of the Restoration—and re-established the conscription. He is the author of several remarkable works, still in use in French military schools.

possibly but very small interest; at any rate, they bear witness to the thorough disregard of accuracy shown by Bourrienne, or by the editor of his notes.

Besides, the author of the *Mémoires* excels, when he likes, in passing from involuntary mistakes to wilful calumny, from inaccuracy to fabrication.

In what terms does Bourrienne express himself with regard to Napoleon, to his brothers, his sisters, and to Murat? Murat is a poltroon;* Joseph, an extortioner;† Jérôme, a Heliogabalus;‡ and so on. He follows up his diatribe in this strain throughout the work, and it is easy to understand the following outburst of indignation when King Joseph read this scurrilous pamphlet: "A man must have *some object* § in thus decrying Napoleon's brothers; Bourrienne is doubtless well paid for uttering such inventions." ‖

A few quotations will throw light on Bourrienne's method. "I have here a strict duty to fulfil," he writes in his second volume, "I shall fulfil it; I

* *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol. iii. p. 284.
† *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 346.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. iv. p. 345.
§ *Il faut avoir mission.*
‖ *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. i. p. 277.

shall say what I know and what I have seen." * A noble appeal to truth, indeed! After this, Bourrienne endeavours to prove that Bonaparte, during the visit he paid to the hospital at Jaffa, did not touch the patients infected with the plague, and that those patients were not sent on to Damietta and to Jaffa, but poisoned. "Bonaparte passed hurriedly through the wards," says Bourrienne. . . . Then he adds: "I was walking by his side, and *I declare that I did not see him touch a single patient.*" † In order to appreciate this declaration, it is sufficient to read what M. d'Aure, Commissary-General, former Administrator of the army of the East, wrote on that subject to the *Journal des Débats*, in a letter dated May 8, 1829, which that paper refused to publish:—

"I will just relate the visit paid to the hospital at Jaffa; it took place on Ventôse 21,‡ five days after our having entered that town. The General-in-Chief, Bonaparte, in the company of Dr. Desgenettes,

* *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol. ii. p. 251.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. pp. 256, 257.

‡ March 12.

Chief Surgeon of the army, and of a portion of his staff, visited every part of the hospital. He did more than touch the sores; with the help of a Turkish attendant, General Bonaparte lifted and carried a patient who was lying across the door of one of the wards. This action on his part frightened us very much, on account of the patient's garments being covered over with foam, and with the loathsome matter secreted by a festering sore. After this, the General resumed his inspection calmly and with evident interest, conversed with the sick, endeavoured by comforting words to drive away the fear which the plague aroused in men's minds, and concluded his long visit by entrusting to the special care of the medical staff the patients in whom he had displayed so much interest."*

The writer was an eye-witness to what he relates. We might refer to the evidence of many other similar witnesses, foremost amongst whom may be mentioned Desgenettes. † Bourrienne, who pretends

* *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. i. pp. 44, 45.

† *Histoire médicale de l'armée d'Orient*, by Desgenettes, Surgeon-General, p. 43.

that he witnessed the Jaffa incident, has therefore asserted wilfully the reverse of the truth. In support of the fable relating to the wholesale poisoning of the plague-stricken patients, Bourrienne maintains that there was no means of removing them: "It has been said that the sick were embarked on board men-of-war, but those men-of-war did not exist. Besides, where were the sick landed? Who received them? What became of them? No one has ever mentioned it."* In another passage, he says: "How could it have been possible to remove them by sea? There was not a single boat."†

On the other hand, M. d'Aure, Administrator-general, makes the following report: "The transfer by sea to Damietta was carried out by embarking the wounded and the *plague-stricken patients* on *seven vessels*, which were in the port of Jaffa, and were placed at my disposal by Admiral Gantheaume and entrusted to the command of naval officers. These vessels were *Le Cheboc*, *La Fortune*, the sloop

* *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol. ii. p. 259.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 255.

Helena and the *djermes** bearing the numbers 1, 3, 4, 5, 6." † This positive assertion is corroborated by M. Grobert, Commissioner of War, who says : "The transfer of the sick and wounded was carried out at Jaffa under his ‡ directions, one batch being sent by sea to Damietta, under the supervision of Alphonse Colbert, Commissioner of War, and the other under his personal care, by land to El-Arich; the latter was escorted by the second battalion of the 69th half brigade, under the command of Adjutant-General Boyer." §

We now come to the events of Brumaire 18, which Bourrienne relates with equal bad faith. He alters the facts, he misrepresents Bonaparte's words, and in order the better to deceive his readers as to the attitudes he ascribes to the General before the *Conseil des Anciens*, ‖ he resorts to a shameful

* The name given by French sailors to small boats plying on the Nile or coasting in the Levant.

† *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. i. p. 36.

‡ M. d'Aure's.

§ *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. i. p. 53.

‖ One of the two legislative assemblies instituted by the Constitution of the year III. (1795), which instituted the Directory, and disappeared shortly after its fall on Brumaire 18.

trick. He pretends to give a faithful transcription of the speech of Bonaparte before the above-mentioned Assembly; but, instead of reproducing that which the General delivered at Saint Cloud, on Brumaire 19, at four o'clock in the afternoon, under the circumstances which Bourrienne has himself pointed out, the former private secretary and friend of Bonaparte transcribes the speech delivered in Paris, the day before, at 8 o'clock A.M., before the same Assembly !

On the other hand, when Bourrienne speaks of the royalists, he changes his tone; as the Minister of the Restoration, he gives free scope to his servile disposition and to his *inventive* spirit. For instance, after relating the conspiracy and the arrest of Georges Cadoudal* and his accomplices, he concludes by saying : "It was thought advisable to have them tried by a special tribunal, presided

* A gallant and gifted Vendean leader, who unsuccessfully conspired against the First Consul. He was tried with eleven accomplices, found guilty, and executed (June 26, 1804). He has been accused of having suggested the attempt made on Nivôse 3, year VIII. (December 24, 1800), by Saint-Réjaut, a former naval officer, who had served under him in Vendée.

over, in compliance with Bonaparte's wishes, by the regicide Hémart. I remember that this choice provoked general indignation throughout Paris, inasmuch as it appeared as a proof of the desire of the authorities to find everyone guilty, or to convict innocent people."* The truth is that Hémart never was a member of the Convention; he cannot, therefore, be classed amongst regicides. Besides, Hémart had already long sat as presiding judge of that tribunal. There was, therefore, no occasion to appoint him again to a post which he held already.

I have said enough about Bourrienne's *Mémoires*. M. Boulay de la Meurthe, one of the most eminent and most patriotic men of the Revolution and of the Empire, denounced that work of passion and rancour in terms which deserve to be reproduced:—

"I am not afraid of saying that those pages hardly contain an assertion which is not susceptible of just criticism. Facts, motives, intentions, everything in them is invented and distorted. Instead of a simple, faithful, and truly historical account, we only find therein a worthless romance devoid of connection,

* *Mémoires de Bourrienne*, vol. vi. p. 114.

judgment, and even the semblance of truth, the materials for which were supplied to Bourrienne partly by his imagination misled by cupidity and by a desire for vengeance, but chiefly by those previous writings, equally dictated by passion, which only deserve the name of libels." *

Amongst the men of the generation of 1830 those libels only aroused a feeling of disgust. The writings which attacked our glories and celebrated our misfortunes only met with indignation in those days. Is nothing left to us of that generous indignation? Has party spirit so transformed and degraded us that we have come to listen to such men as Bourrienne?

* *Bourrienne et ses erreurs*, vol. ii. p. 46.

MADAME DE RÉMUSAT.

Is Madame de Rémusat a historian deserving of serious refutation? Can she even be said to be a historian at all? Undoubtedly not. However, seeing that M. Taine thought fit to draw freely from her Memoirs, we are necessarily compelled to speak of that collection of gossiping denunciation, displaying all sorts of petty passions: wounded self-love, mistaken calculations, unsatisfied ambition, the anger of the woman who has been jilted and deceived in her hopes.

Besides, Madame de Rémusat herself has helped me powerfully in my task. I shall contrast her *Correspondance* and her *Mémoires*. The comparison will be found to be telling. It is impossible for any author to contradict himself more thoroughly.

The *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, edited by her grandson, M. Paul de Rémusat, were written in 1818, several years after the fall of the Empire, under circumstances which it is important to recall.

The posthumous work of Madame de Staël (*Considérations sur la Révolution Française*), had just been published. Madame de Rémusat was "struck by those violent pages wherein the authoress gave vent to her rather declamatory hatred against Napoleon. She herself, no doubt, experienced some similar feeling, but could not forget that she had held a rather different opinion of the Emperor. People who are fond of writing are easily induced to explain on paper their conduct and their feelings."*

She was urged to write her work by her son Charles, who wrote to her, with reference to Madame de Staël's book: "That book has strongly revived the regret I felt at your having destroyed your Memoirs. And it occurred to me that you should, as far as you can, make up for their loss. En-

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i., Preface, p. 86.

deavour to recollect, not indeed the particulars of events, but principally your impressions concerning those events."*

Madame de Rémusat apprehended the difficulties of her task. She quite grasped the shortcomings of her work; she fully owned to having seen but the reverse side of events, she knew that their origin, their object, their connection had quite escaped her.

"A woman cannot be expected to relate the political incidents of Bonaparte's life. When I first visited St. Cloud, and during the first years of my stay there, I could observe but isolated facts, and those even only from time to time. I shall, however, mention what I saw, or, at least, what to me appeared to be the real facts. . . ."†

Thus, according to her own confession, Madame de Rémusat's *Mémoires* were written at a time when she could no longer be sincere. Without here entering upon considerations of a more private nature, it is sufficient to point out that, under the stimulus of the violent writings of Madame de Staël

* *Correspondance de Monsieur de Rémusat*, vol. iv. p. 287.
† *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 167.

and in accordance with the urgent request of her own son—who was a close partisan of the ideas inaccurately called liberal, and enjoyed great influence over her—Madame de Rémusat, at last giving way to her "political hatred, was bitten by* an unconquerable desire of speaking of Bonaparte"† ; the inevitable result was a work entirely biassed by party spirit.

Indeed, she was not devoid of apprehension with respect to the publication of those *Mémoires*. On October 8, 1818, she wrote to her son: "Do you know what thought sometimes worries me? I say to myself, 'If it should happen that some day my son were to publish all this, what would people think of me?"‡

Did not the "scruples" of her son, in having so long delayed that publication, somewhat arise from the same cause? But, the Second Empire having been overthrown, the desire arose of dealing a severe blow at the name of Napoleon, and it was hastily

* "Fut mordue du besoin de parler de Bonaparte."

† *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i., Preface, p. 87.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i., Preface, p. 93.

decided to publish the work of a prejudiced woman about compromising whose reputation there could be no further hesitation, seeing that she was no longer alive.

Charles de Rémusat wrote what follows with reference to his mother's work: "Whenever these *Mémoires* are published, I imagine that they will not find the public ready to welcome them unanimously and without contradiction.* . . . I presume that the mob will stick to its error, *et non auferetur ab eâ*. It is therefore highly improbable that the spirit in which my mother wrote will ever be popular, or that all her readers will be convinced. Indeed, I am far from expecting it."†

Can it be asserted that the spirit in which *Madame de Rémusat's Mémoires* have been written is but the outcome of the political opinions which had replaced those the author professed under the Empire? By no means. When, in 1818, she endeavoured to denounce the Imperial régime and government, she was aiming at and trying to brand a man, not an

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. iii., Preface, p. 5.
† *Ibid.*, vol. iii., Preface, p. 7.

idea. She seemed to have lost the recollection of what she had written formerly. Her contradictions are flagrant. When writing her *Mémoires* again she pretends that, in 1805 and 1806, she possessed liberal aspirations,* which, even in 1815, after the fall of Napoleon, were not hers.† From her *Correspondance* it appears that, in that very year 1805, she had a special leaning towards the absolute form of government. "Our nation, so vain, so decried, was ever inconsistent. . . . Considering all the excesses it has indulged in, it is less fit than any other to be ruled by liberal ideas. . . . It occurred to me to say this to our old friend . . . he twitted me with having a taste for despotism."‡

We soon notice another feeling of a more private and less lofty nature which we cannot refrain from mentioning.

In 1802, M. and Madame de Rémusat were in difficult circumstances. "M. de Rémusat," wrote the authoress, "was anxious to emerge from obscurity, and—why should I not say so?—to get out

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 379.

† *Correspondance de Monsieur de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 44.

‡ *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. pp. 244, 245.

of difficulties." * He succeeded in this owing to the intimacy existing between his wife and Madame de Beauharnais, who afterwards became Madame Bonaparte. M. de Rémusat was attached to the household of the First Consul. As for Madame de Rémusat, she received the title of Lady-in-Waiting, and, later on, of Lady of the Household. The welcome extended to them by the First Consul was of a nature to create the highest hopes. "We then occupied, my husband and I, a high position, which excited general envy. In order to counteract the latter, we contrived to abstain from everything that might have induced the belief that we intended to make capital out of the favours bestowed on us."†

At that time, Madame de Rémusat—she herself relates it—was already a person of a witty and refined mind. "Most of my companions were better looking than I . . . it seemed as though we had tacitly agreed that they should please the eyes of the First Consul, when in his presence, whereas I should charm his mind." ‡

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i., Preface, p. 27.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 177.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 178.

It is easy to understand the position she intended to occupy at that still very small court. At least, the First Consul displayed towards her an affability, a kindness, and even an indulgence, which delighted her. He went so far as to allow her to make certain remarks, and, sometimes, even to express some disapproval, which he bore patiently. He was fond of her brilliant and sparkling wit. "She was almost the only woman with whom he condescended to converse." *

During an illness of M. de Rémusat, she resided for a month in the camp at Boulogne. She had her breakfast and dinner daily with Bonaparte in the house of the Pont de Briques. "He requested me," she says, "to come daily to breakfast and to dine with him. At six o'clock, Bonaparte used to return and send for me. Sometimes he had guests, at other times we had our dinner *tête-à tête*, in which case he used to talk of a thousand things." †

The evenings were often spent in discussing the

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i., Preface, p. 32.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 265, 266.

gravest questions of philosophy, literature and art, or in listening to the Consul conversing about the years of his youth and his early achievements.

The head of this young woman, twenty years of age, was turned in that intimacy; it opened a boundless field to her imagination. She indulged in dreams of greatness and ambition which were never realised. Those dreams left, in her soul, the bitterness which fills her *Mémoires*. The wound became deeper as Madame de Rémusat saw many persons of the court—whose merits, in her opinion, were far from equalling her own—rise beside her and soon enjoy greater influence and secure higher honours then herself. "Bonaparte," says Madame de Rémusat, "kept my husband in his *entourage*, he employed him, but he did not raise him to the exalted position which he bestowed on other people . . . moreover, the time soon came when we lost all importance. In the first place, people equal to us, and soon afterwards, people much superior to us by their birth and by their fortune, solicited the favour of being admitted to court. Persons more skilled than we were in carrying on intrigues would, in our situation, have redoubled their cunning and

assiduity, . . . but we gave way, and when, whatever be the reason, one loses ground at court, one very seldom regains the post one occupied." * Then she adds: "Eventually, I suffered much on account of my disappointed hopes, my deceived affections, and the failure of some of my calculations."

On her return from Boulogne, Madame de Rémusat became the victim of the malevolent comments of the court, and Joséphine's jealousy was alarmed thereby. "The officers of Bonaparte's household were sometimes surprised that a woman could thus spend long hours with their master, conversing about matters more or less serious, and this led them to suspect my conduct . . . When the Court returned to Paris, the aide-de-camps made fun of our long *tête-à-têtes*. Madame Bonaparte grew alarmed at the account she received . . . I found my jealous protectress somewhat cold towards me . . . My youth and all my feelings revolted against such accusations. At the same time, what people told

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. pp. 403, 404.
† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 377.

me, sufficiently explained the constraint of Madame Bonaparte towards me." *

At that time the Court of the First Consul had become much more numerous. The persons who were admitted to it lived on less intimate terms with Bonaparte. Madame de Rémusat found less frequent opportunities of setting off before him the charms of her mind. When Napoleon became Emperor, intercourse with him grew daily more rare. Then it was that "owing to her rather morbid faculty of indignation, and carried away by the nature of her mind to interfere with things which were not in her province," Madame de Rémusat became involved in several royalist intrigues. Naturally the Emperor was not pleased.

"My mother," says Charles de Rémusat, consented to entertain Madame de Rumfort, M. de Talleyrand, and Fouché at dinner. This was indeed no act of opposition. . . . That meeting, which was natural enough in its object, although, it must be confessed, quite unusual, and which never took place again, was, however, pointed out to the

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. pp. 281, 282.

Emperor, in the reports he received when in Spain, as the proof of an important coalition."*

The following intrigue was graver still, and judged very severely by the Emperor; it is thus related in Madame de Rémusat's own words: "Madame de ——, being anxious to play a trick on Madame de Damas, spoke of her as of a person more eager than ever in her royalism, quite ready to carry on a secret correspondence, and to take advantage of the forbearance displayed towards her to act against the Emperor as much as she could. My connection with her was represented as being still more intimate than it really was. The Emperor, having been acquainted with these reports, was much incensed against me. . . . He no longer invited me to his card-table, and avoided speaking to me; neither did he ask me to any of the hunting or other parties given at La Malmaison, and soon after I fell into disgrace. . . . I made up my mind to see him, but during our interview his manner towards me was most severe. He reproached me with being in league with his enemies, with being the agent of

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. pp. 43, 44, 45.

the royalists, with having aided the Polignacs, and so on. "I wanted," he said to me, "to make a great lady of you, and to raise your fortune very high ; but all this could only have been the reward of your devotion."*

However, M. de Rémusat did not have to suffer from his wife's disgrace ; he was appointed Grand Master of the Robes, High Chamberlain, and, later, Superintendent of Theatres, and Napoleon continued to load him with favours. M. de Rémusat received considerable sums from the Emperor in order to keep up a certain state. The Lafitte property, which is still in the family, was purchased about that time. But Madame de Rémusat no longer enjoyed over the Emperor's mind the fascinating power so deeply felt by the First Consul.

She then affected to cultivate the friendship of M. de Talleyrand, whom a short time before she used to judge with much severity.

"I was acquainted with M. de Talleyrand, and what I had heard, prejudiced me much against him . . . M. de Talleyrand was more artificial than anybody I ever knew, and had suc-

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. ii. pp. 101, 102–104.

ceeded in forming for himself a natural disposition—so to speak—out of habits deliberately acquired . . . I entertained some vague mistrust towards him." * At last, in 1818, after having long cultivated his acquaintance, she thus completes the portrait:—

"There is no doubt that an unfortunate heedlessness as to what is good or bad constituted the basis of M. de Talleyrand's nature." †

Was this intimacy with the Chief Chamberlain necessitated by interest? We might be led to believe it by the following remark from Madame de Rémusat:—

"M. de Talleyrand was not devoid of influence over the Emperor, so that the opinions he expressed when speaking of M. de Rémusat greatly benefited us, and we perceived that the consideration in which we were held had increased thereby . . . His acquaintance became very useful to us. As I have said, M. de Talleyrand conversed with the Emperor about us, and persuaded him that we were quite fit to keep up a grand establishment, and to hold receptions. That is why the Emperor resolved to give

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. pp. 195, 196.
† *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 329.

us the means of holding a brilliant position in Paris . . . M. de Talleyrand was instructed to inform us of those kindly intentions, and I was most happy to owe them to his influence." *

Having shared the fortune of M. de Talleyrand, M. and Madame de Rémusat were also, as we have seen, affected by his disgrace.

Madame de Rémusat learned from M. de Talleyrand many of the ill-natured anecdotes which she relates in her *Memoirs* about Napoleon:—

"I learned the various anecdotes, which I relate as they come to my memory, long after they happened, and only when a greater intimacy between me and M. de Talleyrand had induced the latter to disclose the chief *traits* and characteristics of Bonaparte's disposition." †

Madame de Rémusat preserved her situation as lady of the household to Josephine, even after the Emperor's divorce; as for M. de Rémusat, he retained his post of High Chamberlain until the fall of the Empire. He had been replaced in his other duties, especially in those of Grand Master of the Wardrobe.

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. iii. pp. 192, 270, 271.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 231.

He embraced at once the cause of the Restoration, and was appointed Prefect of the Haute-Garonne, in 1815. At Toulouse, the former chamberlain of the Emperor became the man of the White Terror. General Ramel,* notwithstanding his ardent royalist ideas, was murdered by savage brutes. The prefect did not dare to interfere, although the agony of the unfortunate victim lasted many hours, and took place, so to speak, under the very eyes of that official. M. Decazes, who was then Minister of Police, instructed M. de Rémusat to prosecute the assassins, but that strange administrator met the orders of his superior with the following remark:—

"It would be giving the preference to one party over another."

The murderers of General Ramel were left un-

* Jean Pierre Ramel, Adjutant-General under Moreau during the campaign of the Rhine; he served at San Domingo under Rochambeau, and in Italy and Spain under Napoleon. In 1814, Louis XVIII. appointed him Marshal of the Camp, and Governor of Toulouse in 1815. Having been entrusted with the suppression of the armed Royalist bands which terrified the country, he strictly enforced the execution of his orders, thus bringing upon himself the animosity of the populace, who avenged themselves by murdering him, August 15, 1815, in the most ferocious manner.

disturbed. M. de Rémusat was promoted; he was appointed Prefect of Lille. Madame de Rémusat continues thus:—

"If, in 1814, a great many people wondered at the ardent wishes I expressed for the fall of the founder of my fortune . . . if they twitted us with ingratitude for having so promptly abandoned the cause of the Emperor, it was because they were unable to read our minds, and were unaware of the impressions which we had received long before." *

The hatred aroused in the hearts of women whose hopes have been deceived, or in those of dismissed courtiers, knows no forgiveness. Such is the moral of Madame de Rémusat's *Memoirs*.

If, on the one hand, those *Memoirs*, re-written in 1818, under the circumstances I pointed out, ought to be justly regarded with suspicion, on the other hand, the letters of Madame de Rémusat to her husband, written from day to day, under the Empire, and recently published, constitute a valuable source of history. They form quite a private correspondence, and were not intended for publication. They

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. iii. p. 131.

are replete with vivid, spontaneous, and sincere impressions. "The kind of confession I send," she writes to her husband, "will convince you that my letters are but the outward expression of my thoughts." *

What then were Madame de Rémusat's thoughts when writing those *Letters*? How did she judge the events which struck her, and which she used to note down as they occurred? In order to solve these questions, we shall compare the *Memoirs* with the *Letters*. This comparison will be instructive. It might even furnish a curious study of the human heart, but I shall only seek in it the crushing proof of the partiality of the authoress. To publish, one after the other, such contradictory documents, a writer must needs have little care for history, and be quite indifferent to public opinion.

In the first place, the following is the portrait which Madame de Rémusat draws of Napoleon in her *Memoirs*:—

"It must be confessed that nothing is so base as his soul; it is closed against all generous impulses,

* *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 118.

and possesses no true grandeur. I noticed that he always failed to understand and to admire a noble action . . . Amongst the means of ruling men, Bonaparte invariably selected those that tend to degrade them." * "He used to encourage the weaknesses of men in whom he detected no vice, and when that failed he aroused their fears." † "There is in Bonaparte a certain innate depravity of nature, giving him a special taste for evil, in serious and petty matters alike." ‡ "How repugnant did his service indeed become to those who still possessed in their inmost hearts some of the faculties which, by a sort of instinct, warn the soul of the emotions it is destined to bear!" § "In war he foresaw the means of calling away our attention from the reflections which, sooner or later, his government could not fail to suggest to us, and he reserved it in order to dazzle, or, at least, to enforce silence on us." ‖ "Bonaparte felt that he would be infallibly lost, the day when his enforced in-

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. pp. 105, 106.
† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 366.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 333.
§ *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 129.
‖ *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 223.

activity enabled us to think both of him and of ourselves." *

What a relief whenever the Emperor went away!

"Though dull, life was peaceful in Paris; the absence of the Emperor always seemed to bring some solace; people did not talk more, but they seemed to breathe more freely, and this sense of relief was chiefly apparent in those who were most closely connected with the Imperial Government." †

One could not speak in worse terms of a detested tyrant. These are the sentiments which Madame de Rémusat, writing in 1818, pretended to have professed from 1802 to 1808. The following are extracts from her *Correspondance*, applying exactly to the same years:—

"I often think, my dear, of that empire, the territory of which extends to Antwerp! Consider what a man he must be who can rule it single-handed! and what few instances history offers like him." ‡

"Whilst he creates, so to speak, new nations in his progress, people must be struck, from one end of

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 199.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iii. p. 92.

‡ *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 195.

Europe to the other, by the remarkably prosperous state of France. Her navy formed in two years, after a ruinous revolution, and assuming at last a menacing attitude, after having so long excited the scoffs of a short-sighted enemy; the calm which exists throughout the Empire, notwithstanding the absence of its head; in short, the satisfactory way in which the public service of the country is attended to without ever having had to suffer the slightest inconvenience from that protracted absence: these are sufficient reasons to cause surprise and admiration, and to stir up noble and generous imaginations, and I feel that I am not yet too old for that kind of enthusiasm." *

"When again I reflect on the peace we enjoy, our wise and moderate liberty, which is quite sufficient for me, the glory my country is covered with, the pomp and even the magnificence surrounding us, and in which I delight, because it is the proof that success has crowned our efforts; when, in short, I consider that all this prosperity is the work of one single man, I am filled with admiration and gratitude. What I write here, my dear, is, of course, strictly

* *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 196.

between ourselves, for many people would be anxious to ascribe to these feelings some other cause than that which really inspires them; besides, it seems to me that we are less eager to express the praises that come from the heart than those that proceed from the mind."* "Thank goodness I am, at last, happy and contented! What a pleasure it is to see the Emperor again, and how much that pleasure will be felt here! This splendid campaign, this glorious peace, this prompt return—all is really marvellous; and as for me, who delight to regard Providence as being the main author of the incidents of life, I am happy to detect its protecting hand in the present events."† . . . "Like women, the French are rather impatient and exacting; it is true that the Emperor has spoilt us in this campaign, indeed no lover ever was more anxious to gratify the wishes of his mistress, than His Majesty to meet our desires. . . . You demand a prompt march? Very well, the army that was at Boulogne will find itself, three weeks later, in Germany. You ask for the capture of a town. Here

* *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 160.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 2.

is the surrender of Ulm. You are not satisfied! You are craving for more victories? Here they are: here is Vienna, which you wanted, and also a pitched battle, in order that no kind of success may be wanting. Add to these a whole series of noble and generous deeds, of words full of grandeur and kindness, and always to the purpose, so much so that our hearts also share that glory, and can join it to all the national pride it arouses in us."* . . . "I used to cry bitterly at that time, for I felt so affected that, had I met the Emperor at the moment, I should, I believe, have thrown my arms round his neck, although I should, afterwards, have been compelled to fall on my knees and ask pardon for my conduct."† . . . "What a fine history to write! I wish I had enough talent to do so!"‡ . . .

Thus, Madame de Rémusat confesses, in her *Letters*, that she wished she could have written his history, in order to point out Napoleon to the admiration of the world; whereas, in her *Memoirs* she

* *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 390.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 394.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 393.

defames and exposes him to the hatred of public opinion.

We will, however, proceed with the comparison.

In her *Memoirs*, Madame de Rémusat distinctly accuses Napoleon of being wanting in courage :— "Every kind of personal courage and of generous impulse," she says, "seems foreign to him." * On the other hand, this is the way in which she expresses herself, on the same subject, in her *Letters* :—

"That undaunted courage, carried even to rashness, and which was always crowned with success, that calm assurance in the midst of danger with that wise foresight and that prompt resolution, arouse always new feelings of admiration which it seems can never be surpassed." †

If we are to believe the *Memoirs*, the Emperor aroused a feeling of constraint and reserve in all those who approached him: "He was feared everywhere," she says, "and at a *fête*, as on every other occasion, you could always have detected on the faces of every guest some trace of the secret fear he delighted to

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 106.

† *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. ii. p. 45.

excite."* . . . "He did not know how—and, I believe, did not wish—to make people comfortable; being himself afraid of the least appearance of familiarity, and causing each and all his guests to feel uneasy lest it should occur to him to treat them harshly before the whole company." †

On the contrary, according to the *Letters*, the gracious manners of the Emperor were irresistible: "Yesterday I saw M. de Neny. He had dined with some people from Semur, who were still under the impression of the graciousness the Emperor displayed towards that little town, which, owing to its situation far from the main road, and to its insignificance, never dreamed of being worthy of attracting the notice of any Government. The Emperor spent an hour talking with the notabilities about what could be done for them and their district, as also about the advantages of their position. In short, they were confused and proud of the unforeseen prospects thus opened to them. Afterwards, with the smile with which we are so well acquainted, the Emperor delighted all those who saw him, and displayed the

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. ii. 350.

† *Ibid.*, vol. iii., p. 233.

kindest interest towards the authorities; he was affable towards the mayor, full of grace and gaiety; in fact, the town of Semur is *intoxicated* with his visit, and will long remember it." *

Madame de Rémusat, who ought to be an expert in the matter, represents Napoleon, in her *Memoirs*, as awkward and embarrassed with women: "There was not a woman who was not delighted to see him move away from the place where she was."† . . . "All his life Bonaparte experienced a sort of constraint towards women, and, seeing that he could not bear constraint, and that it made him ill-humoured, he always approached women with a bad grace, scarcely knowing how to address them."‡

How different is that portrait from the one she draws in her *Letters*! "I do not know," she writes on April 24, 1805, "whether you read the French papers; if you did, you will have noticed a detailed account of the very amiable ways of the Emperor when at Brienne. Madame de Brienne's head is turned with joy. It is true that it is not

* *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 116.
† *Ibid.*, vol. ii. p. 77. ‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 112.

possible to display more graciousness than he displayed in that visit. I have seen letters addressed to M. de Damas,* which are full of charming *mots* and anecdotes; in short, it is a regular *flirtation*, which succeeded admirably in your stiff society. Those persons who are hardest to please are compelled to own that ours is a most amiable Sovereign. . . . Amongst the ladies we know, there is not one who would not have been delighted, like Madame de Brienne."†

We now come to Gratitude. In her *Memoirs*, Madame de Rémusat endeavours to relieve herself partly from its weight: "We were poor when we made the acquaintance of the First Consul; his largesses, *rather sold than given freely*, enabled us to obtain the luxury which he so well knew how to prescribe."‡

* Etienne, Chevalier, afterwards Duke de Damas-Crux (a very old and noble French family), emigrated in 1792; was one of the leaders of the expedition to Quiberon, first *menin* (the name given to the six gentlemen composing the household of the Dauphin) of the Dauphin, gentleman of the chamber to the Duke of Angoulême, and Peer of France.

† *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 100.

‡ *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. iii. p. 129.

We will now consult the *Letters*. We shall see in what glowing terms Madame de Rémusat expresses her gratitude, and with how much heart she revels in it:—

"The feeling of gratitude, which we all owe to him, is so sweet, that I really regard it as another favour." * . . . "I am happy," she writes to her husband, "to see him reward your zeal with a preference which you certainly deserve; he is the only one in this world to whom I can give you up." †

M. de Rémusat having expressed his satisfaction at a smile bestowed on him by the Emperor, his wife adds: "I wish you could often secure some of those comforting smiles from the master. You are no fool to be fond of those smiles, and I shall congratulate you, if you secure some." ‡

The idol is at last down. Madame de Rémusat then affirms, in her *Memoirs*, that she has ardently wished for the return of the King: "It is impossible

* *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 166.
† *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 179.
‡ *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 38.

for me to depict the *disinterested* loyalty with which I longed for the King's return."*

These are the *Letters* :—

"People congratulate themselves about the Emperor's successes, respecting which, however, there existed no doubt. May those successes hasten his return! Like Madame de Sévigné, I say, from the depths of my heart: 'May God watch over him.'" † . . . "The heart is grieved, when, considering the immense distance he is from us at present. May God watch over and preserve him for us; such will always be my prayer!"‡

After such quotations, it is, I think, useless to press the point. The contradiction is flagrant. On the one hand, the *Memoirs*, the outcome of recollections, written in full royalist fervour, during the first outbursts of the Restoration; on the other, the *Correspondance*, written from day to day, under the impression of the events it relates; on one side, irreconcilable bitterness; on the other, excessive

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 165.
† *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 321.
‡ *Ibid.* (November 9, 1806), vol. ii. p. 67.

adulation. Such a contrast of hostility and enthusiasm leads one to judge severely. What can be the moral worth of a writer capable of such forgetfulness, or of such ingratitude!

That unsteadiness of mind, that ficklessness of heart, cannot have been solely the result of the calculations of ambition following in the train of fortune. Other reasons as well may have acted on the mind of Madame de Rémusat.

An ambitious mother, she loved her son passionately. She had believed that she might be the counsellor and the confidante of the Emperor! When her delusion vanished, her affection took a new direction. That motherly affection explains doubtless, in a great measure, the sudden royalism which inspired the *Memoirs*. M. Charles de Rémusat himself confesses that there has been a great deal of *exaggerated gossip*.* She dreamed at first, of making her son the Plutarch of the new Cæsar. "Your son," she writes to her husband, "took it into his head to question me about the Revolution, and chiefly about the Emperor. I related to him the campaign in Italy, that in Egypt,

* *On a beaucoup glosé.*

the return to France, the wars and successes which followed. He listened to me with great interest, and when I had finished, he said to me: 'All this mother, sounds like one of Plutarch's lives!' I advised him to study enough to be able to write it some day when bigger, and that idea pleased him."*

But when the young man was old enough to write, Cæsar's statue had been broken. There was no longer any need of a Plutarch. Madame de Rémusat then foresaw that the new order of things might ensure a high situation to her son. She contrived to make him a Royalist of the Liberal School. It is impossible to judge this devoted mother correctly unless one has carefully read the letter in which, whilst rebuking her son for the imprudent severity with which he had expressed himself with regard to M. de Chateaubriand's pamphlet (*Bonaparte et les Bourbons*), she gave him—concerning the calculations that ought to rule his conduct—a lesson which Lord Chesterfield himself would not have disowned: "It is not right that, judging from extracts of a work, the original of

* *Lettres de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. ii. p. 35.

which you have not read, you should say of a man, belonging to a respectable family and bearing a name respected in France, that he is *in the mire*.* M. de Chateaubriand's book will be published to-day. You will see that it was written in view of serving the movement of reaction which has just taken place. Yesterday, before having seen the book, I heard several persons speak of it. It is generally received with favour because of its being regarded as a cry of indignation. I warn you to be very cautious in speaking of it, on your return here. You may speak frankly with me, my boy; but you must take care of the words that escape you in the presence of others. I send you M. de Chateaubriand's book, in order to enable you to see that it is no libel . . . unfortunately it does not contain a single exaggeration concerning the Emperor . . . I would fain sign my name to every page of that book, if it were necessary to prove that it is a faithful picture of all I had witnessed . . . We shall explain to you how, respecting the innocence of your youth, we took care to conceal from you many facts with which it was right that you

* *Dans la fange.*

should be unacquainted. Being destined to serve the Emperor, it was only proper that you should be kept in ignorance of his true character . . . Your father and I have ardently wished—for the last three months—for the success of the reaction which has just taken place. . . Your chief object must be now to attract the goodwill of the public. . . Be prudent and reserved in your words, for it is now important to avoid making enemies, or provoking hatred."*

Being thus trained, it was inevitable that the son should assume over his mother the influence she had herself possessed over him. The *Memoirs* are the outcome of that association of ideas and interests. Hatred dictated them. They deserve no credit.

In short, Madame de Rémusat experienced towards the Emperor a feeling, the excess of which may have given rise to calumny, but the awakening from which had a great deal to do with her treason. She hoped, thanks to the charms of her mind, so fully appreciated by Napoleon, to secure a lasting and profitable influence over him. She cherished the dream of being

* *Correspondance de M. de Rémusat*, vol. i. April 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 1814.

for him an ardent friend, an Egeria. She betrays that dream as much in her enthusiasm for the hero, as in her disappointment at noticing the unimportant part played by women towards the Emperor.

The following sentence discloses the secret of her soul:—

"Had the Emperor been more—and especially better—loved, he, perhaps, might have been a better man."*

Did Madame de Rémusat try to inspire that love? Her *Memoirs* furnish the answer to that indiscreet question.

She had misunderstood Napoleon's nature. Ever preoccupied by the grandeur of his schemes, he escaped from the influence of women. The indifference he professed towards the latter cost him more than one friendship.

Madame de Rémusat passes a very correct judgment in applying to herself the following verse:

Ah, je l'ai trop aimé, pour ne point le haïr!†

* *Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat*, vol. i. p. 144.

† I have been too deeply in love with him, not to hate him now!

THE ABBÉ DE PRADT.

"WRETCHED scoundrel!" (*misérable coquin!*) Such was the exclamation which escaped Napoleon after reading the *Account of the Embassy to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw.**

Did the book and its author deserve that epithet? That is what I intend to examine.

In 1817 Napoleon received the Abbé de Pradt's book at St. Helena, and made notes on it. The words I have quoted above are so written on the copy I possess, which was given me with the following declaration by General Gourgaud,† who left St. Helena in 1818:—

"The notes I have written in the margin with

* *Histoire de l'Ambassade dans le Grand-duché de Varsovie*, by the Abbé de Pradt.

† Baron Gaspard Gourgaud, a brilliant officer, and aide-de-camp to Napoleon after the return from Elba. The Emperor admitted him to his intimacy. In 1815, he was entrusted with the duty of taking to the Prince Regent of England the letter

the most scrupulous exactness are the textual reproduction of those the Emperor made and wrote on the spur of the moment, and with his own hand, when reading that work at St. Helena. The Emperor's copy, with the autograph notes is in my hands, and if required, will be communicated, in case the authenticity of the reproduction of the notes should be disputed.

"GENERAL GOURGAUD.

"Written at Paris, May 29, 1821."

The Abbé de Pradt, born in 1759, of a bourgeoise family of Auvergne, is the accomplished model of a type which has fortunately disappeared. He was, in France, the last specimen of those political abbés, famous for their spirit of intrigue, generally devoid of all scruples, and seldom doing honour to the character of the priesthood, of which they wore only the dress.

by which Napoleon solicited the hospitality of this country. He followed Napoleon to St. Helena, and wrote various works to defend the memory of the Emperor. In 1832, King Louis Philippe created him aide-de-camp and lieutenant-general, and, in 1840, he entrusted him with the duty of bringing back to France the ashes of Napoleon.

His father's name was Dufour; he preferred that of his mother, distantly related to the family of the De La Rochefoucauld.*

Having been sent as deputy to the *Assemblée Constituante* in 1789, he took up the defence of the *ancien régime*. He voted against the union of the three orders,† followed the direction given by the Abbé Maury,‡ and finally emigrated. He at first went to Brussels, which he afterwards left for Hamburg, the chief centre of royalist intrigue.

At the time of his return to France, under the Consulate, the Abbé de Pradt wrote to Louis XVIII. to inform him that he returned to France in order the better to serve His Majesty's interests. That was a way of guarding himself against future emergencies, though he at once courted the favours of the new Government.

Thanks to the protection of Duroc,§ the former

* One of the leading aristocratic families of France.

† That is the clergy, the nobility and the third state (*tiers-état*) composing the States-General.

‡ Jean Siffrein, afterwards Archbishop of Paris and Cardinal, author of many remarkable works. He was the son of a cobbler.

§ Marshal of France, and Grand Marshal of the Palace, under the Empire.

émigré obtained the appointment of Chaplain to the Emperor in 1804.

"I spent nearly ten years with him," he says. "I had wished to be in close contact with the man who, in our days, was stirring the world, just as, had I lived in the time of Cæsar or Timoorlenk, I should have wished to be in the train of those personages who were changing the face of the world. I have attentively observed him. I always deplored the heedlessness of those who surrounded him, and who, for that reason, have inflicted great losses on history." *

The Abbé de Pradt wrote the above in 1815. He wanted Louis XVIII. to believe that he had become attached to the Emperor's person, *out of sheer curiosity*. Was it that same feeling of curiosity which, in 1806, made him accept the Bishopric of Poitiers, the Archbishopric of Malines, and, successively, gifts varying between forty and fifty thousand francs? † If so, it was indeed a most

* *Histoire de l'Ambassade de Pologne*, by the Abbé de Pradt, Preface, p. 3.

† Between £1,600 and £2,000.

lucrative curiosity—which, however, did not satisfy his cupidity, for, in 1815, he wrote that it never occurred to the Emperor "that he had wants to supply and a family to provide for."

He followed the Emperor to Milan. He officiated at the ceremony of Napoleon's coronation as King of Italy. He afterwards accompanied him to Bayonne, where he was intimately mixed up with the affairs of Spain.

Having been sent to the Pope at Savone, he displayed much awkwardness in fulfilling his mission. His conduct in religious questions was always a series of contradictions and falsehoods. Did he not affirm that Napoleon told him, "The *Concordat* was the greatest mistake of my reign"?

The Emperor formally denied it.

"I never regretted," he says, "having signed the *Concordat* of 1801, and I never uttered the remarks ascribed to me on that subject. The *Concordat* was indispensable to religion, to the Republic, and to the Government." *

* *Les quatre Concordats*, by the Abbé de Pradt. *Correspondance de Napoleon I.*, vol. xxx. p. 628.

After being selected, in 1812, for the difficult duties of ambassador to Poland, he behaved there in a manner which I shall examine presently.

Shortly after the Restoration, King Louis XVIII. appointed the former ambassador of the Emperor to an eminent post. The Abbé de Pradt was gazetted High Chancellor of the Legion of Honour; a fit reward for his *honourable* conduct during his mission to Poland.

Betraying Louis XVIII., as he had done Napoleon, the Abbé de Pradt, after the return from Elba, went to present his homage to the Emperor. He met with a cool reception: Napoleon had already thought of him what later he said to O'Meara:* "De Pradt is like a courtesan, who lends her charms to everybody for money." †

When the Restoration was struggling with public opinion, the Abbé de Pradt assumed a new attitude. He became a deputy of the Opposition, and sat on the Liberal benches. Probably deceived in his

* Chief Surgeon to the *Bellerophon*, who was allowed to follow Napoleon to St. Helena.

† *O'Meara's Memoirs*, transcribed by Damas Hinard (*Opinions and Jugements de Napoléon*, t. ii. p. 331).

ambitious hopes, he sided with the adversaries of the very *régime* he had hailed. That last palinodia brought him universal contempt.

What a feeling of loathing must Napoleon have experienced when perusing a book which begins thus:—

"The Emperor was surprised, and from the very depths of his black reverie, he let escape these memorable words: *But for one man, I should have been the master of the world.* Who is then the man, who sharing, as it were, the power of the Deity, could then say: *Non ibis amplius*?* I was that man!"†

Next to a feeling of disgust, such infatuation could only provoke a smile from the Emperor. On the copy I possess, Napoleon added humorously:— "*Ah, Monsieur l'Abbé!*" He also remarked to Las Cases:‡ "This is a scurrilous attack upon me, and

* Thou shalt go no further!

† *Histoire de l'Ambassade de Pologne*, by the Abbé de Pradt, p. 1.

‡ Emmanuel Augustin Diendonné, Count de Las Cases, an officer in the French navy; he became Chamberlain to Napoleon, whom he followed to St. Helena. He is the author of the famous *Mémorial de Sainte Héléne.*

a regular libel, in which he heaps wrongs, insults, and calumny upon me. Yet, either because I was well disposed, or because, as people say, truth alone wounds us, it only made me laugh, it truly amused me" . . . In his *Memoirs* Las Cases also points out that in the opening page of de Pradt's work, the Abbé passed himself off as being the only man who ever stopped Napoleon in his progress. In the closing page of his book, he gives us to understand that after leaving Moscow, the Emperor, on his way back, expelled him from his embassy. That is a fact, which de Pradt's vanity leads him to distort or to avenge. That is the substance of his work.*

That ridiculous vanity, owing to which the Abbé de Pradt never consented to confess his mistakes, notwithstanding the evident failure of his blind or treasonable diplomacy, induced him to bring himself ever to the front. He despised truth and altered or invented the words of his Sovereign.

That same mixture of frivolity and pedantry led the Archbishop of Malines to depict Napoleon as

* *Napoléon, ses opinions, ses jugements,* by Damas Hinard, vol. ii. p. 381.

being subject to careless precipitation.* "The Emperor's idea," says he, "becomes a passion as soon as it exists,"† and the wretched ambassador, seeking an excuse in the mobility of mind of his master, adds, "With Napoleon, the most important matters assume the appearance of fancies." When speaking of the affairs of Poland, the following utterance escaped him: "It was a whim."‡ For de Pradt, Napoleon is not only whimsical and fanciful, but his mind is astray—"He carries his aberrations to the extreme, and wanders *ad infinitum* from a first incorrect argument."§

He places these ridiculous words in Napoleon's mouth: "In five years, I shall be master of the world. There only remains Russia; but I shall crush her. Paris shall extend as far as Saint-Cloud!"‖ "False! and absurd!" Such is the annotation written by Napoleon in the margin. Is it not obvious that if the Abbé de Pradt writes—to please the Restoration—on every page of a book

* *Histoire de l'Ambassade de Pologne*, by the Abbé de Pradt, p. 95.

† *Ibid.*, p. 96.

‡ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

§ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

‖ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

published in 1815, *Napoleon wanted to be the master of the world*, it is only in order to enable himself to add: "I was the only man who prevented him from being so!"

Besides, M. de Pradt contradicts himself as if on purpose. After representing the Emperor to have said: "Paris shall extend as far as Saint Cloud," he writes, a few pages further: "The Emperor hates the sight of Paris." * The Emperor took care to acquaint us with his sentiments towards the great city. In the year IX.† he expressed himself thus: "I place especial confidence in all classes of the people and of the capital. My reliance in them has no limit. If I wanted a refuge, I should seek it in Paris."‡ In 1804, in the course of a speech to the Municipality of Paris, he is reported to have said: "I wish it to be known to you that, in the midst of battles, in the greatest dangers, at sea, even in the heart of deserts, I have always been mindful of the opinion of *this great capital of Europe*. Next to the approbation of

* *Histoire de l'Ambassade de Pologne*, by the Abbé de Pradt, p. 45.

† The Year 1801.

‡ *Le Consulat*, by Thibeaudeau, vol. ii. p. 17.

posterity, that of Paris will ever be the object of my ambition."*

Heedless of, and indifferent to truth, he measures Napoleon by his own standard. He depicts him at Warsaw, after the retreat from Russia, speaking of the reverses of fortune like an actor who has failed in his rôle. He ascribes to the Emperor the well-known words: "From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step." Whereas they really are but the cynical invention of that *pasquin*,† whose mind was ever closed against all that is grand, and for whom life was but a comedy and an intrigue.

It is easy to see that de Pradt was writing in 1815, and that Napoleon was no longer there, otherwise he would not have dared to speak of the Emperor with such impudence.

Whilst serving the Empire, the Abbé de Pradt remained an *émigré*. It must be confessed that, in employing such men, the Emperor carried confidence and generosity to excess. The disgraceful lines in

* Le Moniteur: issue of Frimaire 26, year XIII. (December 17, 1804.)

† From *Pasquino*, a famous Roman wag. A mischievous buffoon.

which the former minister of Napoleon celebrated the triumph of the coalition, and the downfall of the French nation in 1815, should be read by all: "The sun of justice has at last dawned on the work of iniquity, and it has perished. A coalition, the success of which, for twenty years, all political parties were unanimous in declaring impossible, has, at last, sprung from the despair of nations and the salutary fear of Sovereigns . . . virtue was the cement of that unexpected union . . . It would have collapsed a hundred times had it been held together by no other bonds than those of politics . . . but its principle rested on generosity, magnanimity and solicitude for mankind . . . The world, now quieted, breathing freely after its long trials, a relapse into which it no longer fears, will raise, to the princes who ensured the triumph of a moral and generous policy, a monument, beneath which, chained-up macchiavellism will tremble."*

I said that I should examine the part played in Poland by the Abbé de Pradt at the time of the war

* *Histoire de l'Ambassade de Pologne*, by the Abbé de Pradt, Preface, p. 22.

of 1812. That part was infamous: de Pradt, however, over-rates the mischief he did when he pretends to have been the only cause of Napoleon's disaster. The Russian winter contributed, more powerfully than the treasonable incapacity of the ambassador to Poland, to the destruction of the French army. The cynical claim of de Pradt is, nevertheless, based upon serious grounds. His mission to Poland was, if not the chief cause, at least one of the causes of France's misfortune. These are, according to the Abbé de Pradt, the instructions he received from Napoleon, when taking leave of him at Dresden, on May 24, 1812:

"Go and do your best. I wish to see what you can do. You may well suppose that I did not call you here to say mass. You will have to keep up much state . . . Pay every attention to the women. That is an essential point in Poland. You can have *chefs* in a fortnight's time. As for me, I am going to beat the Russians . . . I am going to Moscow. One or two battles will take me there. The Emperor Alexander will fall on his knees. I shall burn Tula, and Russia will be at my mercy. I am expected in Moscow. It is the heart of the Empire. Besides, I

shall carry on the war with Polish blood. I shall leave fifty thousand Frenchmen in Poland. I shall make a Gibraltar of Dantzig. I shall pay the Poles a yearly subsidy of fifty millions.* They have no money, and I am rich enough to afford it. Without Russia the Continental system is folly. Spain cost me a great deal. But for her, I should be master of Europe. When everything is over, my son will only have to *step into my shoes*. He will not require much genius for that."†

"This is false!" Such is the annotation written in the Emperor's handwriting on the margin of the page containing that passage. "Never did a Prince utter such nonsense."

Indeed, the following is the exact text of the instructions dictated by the Emperor to his secretary, Baron Fain: "If I invade Russia, I shall perhaps go as far as Moscow. One or two battles will open the road to me. Moscow is the real capital of the Empire; peace must be signed there. I am of opinion that a single

* Two millions sterling.

† *Histoire de l'Ambassade de Pologne*, by the Abbé de Pradt, pp. 55, 56, 57.

campaign will be sufficient. If, however, war should drag on longer, it would be the business of the Poles to do the rest. I should leave with them fifty thousand Frenchmen and give them a subsidy of fifty millions, in order to help them. Such is my plan. You are now acquainted with it, act accordingly. Your first care must be to bring about a general rising. No efforts must be spared to keep up the enthusiasm. I rely on you to make the best of the zeal and goodwill of those brave Poles."*

This gives an idea of the spurious process of the *Abbé bel-esprit*. His vain and perfidious pen alters words and acts alike. Truth is the thing about which he least troubles himself.

At the time he entered upon the campaign of Russia, Napoleon fully expected the active co-operation of Poland. The enthusiasm of her people was boundless. The Abbé de Pradt was renowned for his ability as a diplomatist. He should act as the envoy of the Empire to the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, whilst the French army, vigorously as-

* *Manuscrit de* 1812, by Baron Fain, vol. i. p. 75.

suming the offensive, should have invaded the interior of Russia.

At St. Helena, Napoleon expressed the following severe judgment on the attitude of his ambassador: "The Abbé de Pradt, instead of securing the various aims I had in view, did us a deal of harm at Warsaw. Endless reports unfavourable to him had reached me. Even the youngest *attachés* of his embassy were shocked at his conduct, and went so far as to accuse him of connivance with the enemy — an imputation which I was far from crediting."*

When writing those lines, Napoleon had not then read M. de Pradt's libel. As soon as the latter came into his hands, the Emperor wrote in the very margin of the page in which the felon-diplomatist endeavoured to explain the torpor in which the Polish nation was sunk during the whole of the Russian campaign, "That is how the wretch betrayed me!" And when, in a further passage, the Abbé de Pradt pretends that the Poles indulged in "blessings" towards the Prussian Government,

* *Mémorial de Sainte Hélène.*

did not complain of the Russian rule, and made no effort to regain their independence,* Napoleon added, in the margin opposite: "*They, however, made that effort when this wretch was turned out of Warsaw and everything seemed lost!*"

In the account he gives of the way in which the Emperor parted from him at Warsaw, the Abbé de Pradt represents himself as having played the noblest part. Unhappily for him, his successor to the embassy at Warsaw, M. Bignon, who had been constantly with him during the whole of the campaign, and whose patriotism and energy form a striking contrast with the weakness of M. de Pradt, took upon himself to disclose the truth. "In opposition to the account fabricated and controverted, in 1815, by M. de Pradt, during the foreign occupation, there exists," says M. Bignon, "another document, the date of which is more reliable, and which gives the most positive denial to the assertions of that diplomatist. It is the letter in which the Emperor

* *Histoire de l'Ambassade de Pologne*, by the Abbé de Pradt, p. 136.

Napoleon instructs his Minister of Foreign Affairs to recall his ambassador at Warsaw. That letter bears the date of December 11, 1812, *i.e.* the day following that when the conversation, which M. de Pradt distorted so odiously, passed between the latter and his master. Unlike M. de Pradt, Napoleon did not write to please his enemies. He did so in order to keep up to the mark those who served him, and the tone of his communication bears sufficient testimony to the sincerity of his conviction: 'I was,' wrote the Emperor, 'quite surprised at all the *ridiculous* talk indulged in, in my presence, by the Abbé de Pradt, for a whole hour. *I did not let him see it.* It strikes me he possesses none of the qualities required for the post he occupies. This Abbé is devoid of judgment, and only has the wit of books. You may recall him at once, or wait until my return to Paris, when you can send him back to his diocese.' "*

The letters of recall for this strange ambassador

* *Histoire de la France sous Napoléon*, by Bignon, t. xi. p. 173. *Correspondance de Napoléon I^er^*, t. xxiv. p. 394, Appendix, No. 19,384.

were promptly despatched, though not sufficiently so to deprive him of the opportunity of spreading the most perfidious suggestions amongst the Poles. According to his own account, he examined with them what new masters they had best serve. Far from endeavouring to encourage them to remain faithful to their French allies, he left them entirely free to act as they pleased; he never interfered with them, but said to them: "Everything is over, you must now think of yourselves."* M. de Pradt drove them into the hands of Prussia, the most implacable enemy of France. The number of the Poles who followed his traitorous advice was not great, as nearly all the army of Poniatowski joined the Emperor in Germany.

What is to be thought, however, of the disloyal ambassador who uttered the cry of *sauve qui peut*? What of that priest who, in order to mask his defection, outraged the prince whose favours he had solicited for ten years?

Need anyone wonder that, after reading such

* *Histoire de l'Ambassade de Pologne*, by the Abbé de Pradt, p. 228.

calumny and mean boasting, and with his heart filled with bitter indignation, Napoleon should have uttered the severe words quoted above, and which sum up the true character of the Abbé de Pradt.

MIOT DE MÉLITO.

I KNOW not why M. Taine borrowed so often from the *Mémoires du Comte Miot de Mélito.* That work is not the personal contribution of M. Miot. It was published in 1858, many years after his death, by his son-in-law, M. de Fleischmann, a German general most hostile to Napoleon, and who, perhaps, allowed himself to be ruled by the recollection of what he did in 1813. That general had been minister of the King of Würtemburg to King Louis-Philippe, and he edited this work during his residence in Paris. Letters on this subject were exchanged between General de Fleischmann and myself in the issue of the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, bearing the date of July 1, 1867. The mere fact that these *Mémoires* are from the pen of a German officer,

avowedly an adversary of Napoleon's memory, lessens their historical value.

I might have made no mention of them, or, at least, have confined myself to pointing out the perfidious care with which M. Taine—ever faithful to his method, which consists in collecting with partiality from suspicious authorities—prudently selected the passages which suited his purpose, without according any attention to the bulk of the work, which praises Napoleon as much as it criticises him.

But my intention is to show what M. Taine does with the works he quotes, and how little the impression left by reading them agrees with the conclusions he tries to draw from them. Besides, though in itself the book does not possess much value, the man, whose *Mémoires* it purports to be, is, in many respects, interesting to consult.

We will first examine who that man was.

Miot was contemporary with Napoleon. He relates what he saw ; but he was scarcely acquainted with the Emperor, with whom he seldom came in contact. He was a friend, or rather a courtier, of Joseph, and it is well known what difficulties arose between the Emperor and his brother—owing to the

awkward position of the latter—in connection with the affairs of Spain.

The real type of an official, Miot was of an inferior mind, and always the prey of his private interests. He hardly concealed his pre-occupations, and readily submitted to accomplished facts, even though he criticised them.

From a military point of view, those *Mémoires* are worthless. They contain very few general data relative to the dreadful war in Spain, and are almost mute concerning the campaign of Naples.

Miot was Minister of the Interior to Joseph in Naples, and Keeper of his privy purse (*Intendant de la liste civile*) in Spain. Upon the pressing recommendation of Joseph, Napoleon appointed him Count de Mélito, and this Imperial count must be ranged amongst those who bite the hand that feeds them (*qui mordent la main qui les a nourris*).

With the shrewd spirit of observation with which he was so much gifted, Napoleon, speaking of Miot's brother, who, under the Empire, had written the history of the expedition to Egypt, said to O'Meara : "He says I threatened him on account of his book. That is untrue. I once told his brother that he

might as well have abstained from writing lies. He was a timorous sort of man." * This last criticism equally applied to both brothers.

It is not the first time one has been mistaken for the other.

Towards the close of the Empire, Miot was suspected of mixing in Royalist intrigues with more ardour than his usual prudence warranted. He repels that accusation in his *Mémoires*, and explains that he was mistaken for his brother. At all events, what he says of the latter enables us to judge of the treasonable practices indulged in in those days.

"In 1814," writes Miot, "Talleyrand thought the opportunity of avenging himself too good not to take advantage of it . . . M. de Jaucourt, an intimate friend of M. de Talleyrand, was a member of the household of King Joseph, at the Luxembourg,† and punctually discharged the duties connected with his position. He was the spy of the Prince of Benevento. My brother, Colonel Miot, equerry to King

* *Correspondance de Napoleon I^er^*, t. xxxii. p. 401.

† The palatial residence built for Queen Marie de Medicis, in which the sittings of the Senate are now held.

Joseph, resided at the Luxembourg, and M. de Jaucourt often wrote to him in order to know the truth. My brother used to reply to all the notes of M. de Jaucourt . . . Thus my name happened to be mentioned in the Royalist Committee, in support of the authenticity of the information transmitted to its members by M. de Jaucourt. From the coincidence of name, the subaltern spy, whose duty it was to acquaint the police with whatever happened at that Committee, came to the conclusion that I was the person alluded to, and reported me as being the guilty party." *

Whilst denying that he had anything to do with those intrigues, Miot did not dissemble his royalist feelings in the *Mémoires* he wrote after the fall of the Empire, but rather affected towards the Bourbons a devotion which all his past belies : "Whenever the question has to be decided between the Bourbon family and that of Bonaparte, there will not be the slightest hesitation on the part of the country." † That prophecy is previous to 1841. It

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. iii. pp. 344, 345.

† *Ibid.*, t. ii. p. 60.

must be confessed that Miot was indeed a bad prophet, for, in 1848—a few years later—France gave his words an emphatic denial.

This is the judgment he passes upon himself: when acting in an official capacity in Spain, he was of opinion "that it would have been better to have given up the undertaking. But," says he, "such a proposal could not be risked at that time; I, therefore, had no alternative but to submit."* . . . He, indeed, submitted . . . to keeping his situation. Further, with reference to the distribution of the *labramientos*, he says: "I received my share, but, having thought it advisable to apply the sum that was given me to the purchase of national properties, the latter having been confiscated after the return of King Ferdinand, I lost that sudden fortune." † We thus see that, though Miot sometimes criticised accomplished facts, he yet did not disdain to profit by them.

In 1811, on his return to Paris, which he had left since 1806, he is chiefly anxious about his title of

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. iii. p. 16.
† *Ibid.*, t. iii. p. 169.

Count de Mélito. He informs us that he obtained from King Joseph a letter to Napoleon in view of securing the acknowledgment of that title by the latter,* and he adds: "That is a weakness which I cannot forgive myself." †

In April 1814, after the abdication of the Emperor, Miot's loyalty soon vanished: "That abdication having released the *Conseillers d'État* (Councillors of State) from the allegiance they had sworn to the Emperor, they gave assent to the change which had taken place. I was one of those who signed the act of adhesion." ‡

When Napoleon returned from Elba, Miot said: "I have nothing special to record concerning that return, except that it grieved me very much." § He adds afterwards: "I could not refuse to re-enter the *Conseil d'État*, from which the King had excluded, and to which the Emperor recalled me. I therefore obeyed, not without a certain amount of regret." ‖

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* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. iii. p. 287.
† *Ibid.*, t. iii. p. 291.
‡ *Ibid.*, t. iii. 371.
§ *Ibid.*, t. iii. p. 377.
‖ *Ibid.*, t. iii. p. 378.

Such is indeed the character of the Count de Mélito. A judicious observer, when his private interests are not at stake, he expresses, with the indifferent accuracy of an official ready to serve any government, the diverse and often contrary impressions made upon him by the men and the events he saw.

On the occasion of his mission to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, Miot met General Bonaparte for the first time at Nice in 1796. This is the impression that meeting made on him.

"In his concise style, full of life, though incorrect and wanting in uniformity, as also in the nature of the questions he put me, I detected that he was no ordinary man. I was struck by the extension and the depth of the military and political views he pointed out, which I had never noticed in any of the letters I had previously exchanged with the generals of our army in Italy."*

Next comes an exact appreciation of the part to be played by the army of Italy and by its leader:—

"The Clichy party† was intriguing with Pichegru

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. i. p. 81.

† The Royalist Party; thus called after a club founded by them in 1797, rue de Clichy.

and Moreau. . . . Not so was it with Bonaparte and the army of Italy—and the democratic party founded its hopes on the latter. . . . The army of Italy prided itself on being wholly composed of revolutionists and citizens; that of the Rhine was looked upon as being an army of gentlemen (*armée de Messieurs*), as it was called at Milan."* A corps d'armée was on the point of being despatched to France, in case that which Hoche had already sent to subdue Paris should prove insufficient."† That is a valuable bit of information, seeing that it shows Hoche to have been disposed to lend a hand to a *coup d'état.*

With respect to the return from Egypt, Miot relates an important point in a conversation he had at Morfontaine‡ with Joseph:—"He informed me that some means had been discovered of acquainting Bonaparte with the state of affairs in France. I further learned that an order to return had been forwarded to the General. That order had been

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. i. p. 180–81.

† *Ibid.*, t. i. p. 183.

‡ Also called Mortefontaine, a village in the Oise Department, famous for its château, the residence of King Joseph.

signed, with other papers, by the members of the Directory, without their being aware of its purport. . . . On being entrusted with that revelation, I could not help wishing for the success of the stratagem. At that time I looked upon Bonaparte's return as being the happiest event that could happen to my country. It seemed to me that Bonaparte was the only person capable of saving it."*

In another passage, however, Miot gives a different version of the case:—"It was Merlin, a member of the Directory, who, on Prairial 30, year VII., proposed to recall Bonaparte, who was then in Egypt. The decree to that effect had even been passed on Merlin's motion, but it had not been sent off. The family of Bonaparte succeeded, however, in obtaining an official copy of that document and forwarded it to the General in Egypt."†

With reference to the 18th Brumaire, Miot confesses that his first impression was unfavourable. "But," he adds, "having received a message from General Berthier—who had just been appointed

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. i. p. 240.
† *Ibid.*, t. i. p. 284.

Minister of War—entrusting me with the post of Secretary-General to his Department—a position which, a few months before, had been refused to me by the *patriot* Bernadotte—I readily made up my mind to accept the offer.* . . . When I reached Paris, success had justified that illegal measure.† . . . Thus I found that all enlightened and patriotic Frenchmen had flocked round Bonaparte."‡

After Marengo, Miot writes:—"Never before had the national pride been so flattered, never had greater hopes of happiness filled the souls of the people. . . . For two days, Paris was truly *intoxicated* with joy . . . all fears disappeared and nobody regretted having vested so much power in a man who made such a noble use of it."§

Miot approves all the acts of the new government and does full justice to the direction given to public affairs by the First Consul. Amongst other things, he says:—

"The authors of, and actors in, the affairs of

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. i. p. 258.
† The *coup d'état* of Brumaire.
‡ *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. i. p. 267.
§ *Ibid.*, t. i. p. 301.

Brumaire, who thought themselves entitled exclusively to official appointments, were mortified at being obliged to share them with the men against whom they had fought and whom they had vanquished."* . . . Bonaparte was acquainted with the embezzlements committed by Talleyrand, Lucien, (as may be seen, I quote faithfully), and Bourrienne, as also with the petty thefts of inferior officials. He, however, did all in his power to put a stop to them by degrees, and even to punish their authors."†

This is a valuable assertion, coming as it does from a person who is represented to us as adverse to Napoleon.

The only restriction to Miot's admiration relates —who would believe it!—to the institution of prefectures, respecting which he expresses himself in the following terms:—

"By concentrating the administration of the country in the hands of the prefects and sub-prefects, that law‡ stamped out all traces of the republican organization. The police, the finances, and the

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. i. p. 283.

† *Ibid.*, t. i. 320.

‡ The law relative to the institution of Prefectures.

administrative authority were transferred from the representatives selected by the people to agents whom the Government could appoint or dismiss as it liked."*

I point out incidentally this singular criticism, only because it shows what obstacles the initiative of the First Consul had to overcome, in a society in which a future Councillor of State entertained such erroneous views respecting the distribution of power.

Some of the particulars furnished by M. Miot concerning the breaking off of the negotiations relative to the execution of the Treaty of Amiens are not devoid of interest: "King Joseph insisted upon the strict observance of the treaty he had personally negotiated and signed† . . . Lord Windthurst‡ had several times declared it his intention to treat only with Joseph Bonaparte, and not with Talleyrand or his associates, who, said the British ambassador, could only be approached *cash in hand*.§ . . . Regnaud de Saint Jean d'Angely‖

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. i. p. 280.

† *Ibid.*, t. ii. p. 73.

‡ H.I.H. probably means Lord Whitworth.

§ *Ibid.*, t. ii. p. 77.

‖ Michel Louis Etienne, French politician. An ardent admirer and faithful supporter of Napoleon, who made him a Count and Minister of State, he was exiled at the Restoration.

was instructed to propose, as a *mezzo termine*,* to leave Malta in the hands of Russia. That proposal was brought at 10 o'clock on the Tuesday night by Malouet† to the Ambassador, but was declined. Lord Windthurst‡ declared his inability to accede to it, and insisted on the entire cession of the island."§ This is an important testimony, but it proves once more that the breach of the Peace of Amiens was on the part of England.

Napoleon had been fancifully depicted as sternly bent upon the foundation of an hereditary Empire. The following is, however, the series of ideas and incidents by which the Imperial heredity eventually forced itself upon Napoleon. "Heredity and the advantages arising from it were a real necessity in those days, and, *whatever* might have been Bona-

* Compromise.

† Pierre Victor Malouet, French statesman, member of the Privy Council of Louis XVI., Governor of Guyana and director of the Arsenal of Antwerp. Napoleon created him Baron in recognition of the part he took in the defence of Walcheren against the English. Louis XVIII. appointed Malouet Minister of Marine in 1814, but he died shortly after having taken possession of his post.

‡ See footnote p. 290.

§ *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. ii. p. 78.

parte's *répugnance* towards that system, he was bound to submit to it."* Some one having ventured an objection in the presence of the Emperor, the latter exclaimed: "Does he think I introduced these changes for private reasons? I did so in order to enable France to resume her place in the European concert. . ."† He also said to Joseph: "That system is not mine; you are aware of it. I should have preferred the elective imperial system."‡

When he relates this opinion of Napoleon, Miot deserves full credence, for he both deplored and regarded it as a grievance against the Emperor.

What accusations has not Moreau's impeachment and trial brought upon Napoleon! This is how Miot expresses himself as regards that event: "Having been, for a time, informed of the police reports, I was enabled to form an opinion on the whole affair,§ and on the share taken by Moreau in it. . . . It seemed quite clear to me that the

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. ii. p. 162.

† *Ibid.*, t. ii. p. 217.

‡ *Ibid.*, t. ii. p. 262.

§ The Pichegru conspiracy against Bonaparte.

authors of the plot were under the impression that it was not sufficient to strike Bonaparte, but that they must also secure somebody to act as a stop-gap during the time that might elapse between the fall of Bonaparte and the restoration of the Bourbons. Moreau's hatred towards Bonaparte, the prestige his victories had given him, the weakness of his nature, and the unsteadiness of his principles, seemed to point him out as the only suitable person to play that part. . . . Though I did not think Moreau had an active hand in the projected assassination, yet it seemed to me beyond doubt that he concerted with Pichegru, the probable consequences of the assassination, and the means of turning them to their advantage.* . . . Moreau was found guilty.† He was permitted to go to the United States, and, in order to afford him the means of establishing himself there, Napoleon bought of him the house he possessed in the Rue d'Anjou, for which he paid him eight hundred

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. ii. pp. 142, 143.

† His sentence was, however, commuted by the First Consul.

thousand francs*—a sum much above its real value. That house was afterwards presented by Bonaparte to Bernadotte, who had no scruple in accepting it. The price of that house was paid in full to Moreau before his departure for Cadiz."†

What a wicked man was this Bonaparte !

That which Miot relates concerning Queen Caroline, ex-Queen of Naples, is well worth remembering She directed the murderous attempts on the life of Salicetti, King Joseph's Minister. Miot, who was then Minister of the Interior to Napoleon's brother, informs us that, at the trial, it was proved that " the apothecary—who was called Viscardi—and his son, acting as the agents of Queen Caroline, were indeed the authors of the crime."‡ That is how the Bourbons carried on their opposition to the rule of Joseph in Naples ! In France or abroad, murder was always their great means of action.

The quarrel between Soult§ and King Joseph in

* £32,000 sterling.

† *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. ii. p. 203.

‡ *Ibid.*, t. ii. p. 353.

§ Nicolas Jean de Dieu Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, Marshal and peer of France. He contributed powerfully to the victories

Spain is faithfully recorded by Miot. He quotes the letter written by Soult to Napoleon, and containing accusations of treason against Joseph.* He also relates the negotiations that were carried on with the *junta*† of Cadiz, after the taking of Seville. These are interesting facts.

At Cadiz—the only part of the peninsula that was free from foreign invasion—the Spaniards hesitated an instant between three alternatives: Joseph, who brought them a constitution and serious reforms, amongst which were the suppression of the Inquisition and of religious orders, and civil equality; Ferdinand VII., whom they suspected of being an incorrigible Bourbon—as subsequent events only proved too well—whose release they, however, did not foresee, and who was then cringeing and bowing before Napoleon, the hand of whose niece he was begging; lastly, the English, whose

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of Austerlitz, Jena and Eylan, and successfully confronted General John Moore in Spain. He was appointed Minister of War by Louis XVIII. and by Louis Philippe, whom he represented at the coronation of Queen Victoria.

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. ii. pp. 99 and 245.

† Town council.

arrogance wounded the national pride, and who treated their armies without regard or consideration.

This situation was well calculated to arouse reflections in the minds of Spanish patriots. Napoleon mentioned those negotiations at St. Helena. Señor Argueles, whom, in their picturesque style, the Spaniards called "the divine Argueles," and who, in 1812, had been entrusted with the drawing up of the official report relative to the constitution of Cadiz, fully assured me of the existence of those negotiations, when I made his acquaintance in Madrid in 1846.

I would fain recall here a personal recollection which shows in its true light the nature of Napoleon's undertaking in Spain. In 1835, in London, where we were all exiles, I met, at the residence of my uncle Joseph, General Mina, the famous guerilla leader during the war of the Spanish independence. He was paying a visit to the King, his former enemy. He remained some time with my father and myself. I fancy I still see Mina striking his forehead and still hear him say: "To think what little glory is attached to my name was won in

fighting this brave and kind man,* for the sake of the hateful Ferdinand VII., and that, in so doing, I believed I was acting as a patriot! I am to-day an exile like yourselves, and I wonder whether I should not have better served the interests of Spain by embracing the cause of the new dynasty, and stipulating for a constitution which would have united all of us."

Thus, according to the confession of one of the most spirited and most gallant adversaries of France in Spain, the ultimate object of Napoleon's undertaking in the Peninsula was—after the expulsion of the English, which was the first aim of the war—to cause justice and progress to reign in that unhappy country.

The sincere Republicans, the true sons of the Revolution, fully understood Napoleon's intentions. The only proof I shall give of their perspicacity is borrowed from the very work I am now quoting. In his memoirs, Miot refers, with almost unconscious faithfulness, to the fine letter written by Carnot on January 24, 1814. That document has too often

* King Joseph.

been overlooked and deserves special notice in these pages written in exile. I will transcribe it here, and point it out as an example for all those who are incapable of sacrificing their passions to the greatness of their country.

"SIRE,

"So long as success crowned your undertakings, I abstained from offering to Your Majesty services which I feared might not have proved agreeable. . . . To-day, Sire, seeing that misfortune subjects your patience to a sore trial, I do not hesitate to place at your disposal the feeble means I still possess. The help of a sexagenarian arm is, doubtless, of little avail. It has, however, occurred to me that the example of an old soldier, whose patriotic sentiments are well-known, might rally many people round your eagles."*

In consequence of that letter, General Carnot was entrusted with the defence of Antwerp. He only surrendered the place after the abdication of the Emperor; and when Bernadotte, Prince Royal of

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. iii. p. 345.

Sweden, tried to open negotiations with him, Carnot said to him: "I was the friend of the French General Bernadotte, but I am the enemy of the foreign prince who turns his arms against my country."

In 1813, the Emperor felt the necessity of territorial sacrifices. On November 27, he wrote to his brother: "My present position no longer permits me to contemplate ruling over foreign countries. I shall deem myself fortunate if, by peace, I can preserve the territory of ancient France."* Napoleon's views were thus, at that time, full of moderation and foresight. It was his enemies, as I have already pointed out, who did not want peace, especially since Austria, guided by Metternich, joined the coalition at Dresden, in June 1813.

The foregoing passages appear to me the most important in Miot's work. It may be seen what M. Taine has done with them.

Although I do not feel much interest in the part he played personally and in his disconnected and contradictory judgments, I nevertheless believe

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. iii. p. 309.

that, as regards the incidents he saw and with which he was mixed up, his testimony is not quite devoid of historic value. On the other hand, Miot is imperfectly acquainted with what he did not see. Thus what he says of the relations between Napoleon and Lucien is inaccurate. When he maintains that they only met again in 1815, he forgets their interview at Mantua in 1805. He makes another mistake when he says that Lucien came from Rome to Paris, after the return from Elba, whereas Lucien, who was a prisoner in England at the time, arrived from London.*

He commits another error when, speaking of the *Champ de Mai*, he says that Joseph was the sole brother of Napoleon whose rights to the crown had been acknowledged. He forgets Louis, comprised in the same *senatus-consultum* as Joseph, in 1804, and Jerôme whose rights were the object of another *senatus-consultum* passed in 1807. Lucien was the only one whose rights to the imperial succession had been omitted.

I shall not point out the inaccuracies, the contro-

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. iii. p. 396.

verted or curtailed citations, often given without any indication of their source, which crowd the passages borrowed by M. Taine from the *Mémoires* of Count de Mélito. I must, however, bring under his notice the following passage with which Miot concludes the portion of his *Mémoires* relative to Napoleon, and which ought not to have escaped so sagacious a critic.

"Napoleon was to the last moment the king of the people of Paris, and, amongst that people, the influence of his name outlived even the existence of its owner."*

* *Mémoires de Miot de Mélito*, t. iii. p. 395.

CORRESPONDENCE OF NAPOLEON I.

THE publication of the *Correspondance de Napoléon Ier* has been the object of numerous criticisms. People denounced it as being incomplete and as having been purposely expurgated. M. Taine pretends that the whole correspondence comprised about eighty thousand documents, out of which only thirty thousand have been published. Twenty thousand letters were put aside, says M. Taine, as being repetitions, and about thirty thousand for the sake of propriety or for political reasons. Thus only half the letters written by Napoleon to Bigot de Préameneu* on ecclesiastical affairs have been

* Felix Julien Jean, a distinguished jurist, appointed President of the legislative section of the *Conseil d'État* by Napoleon, he was one of the authors of the *Code civil*. He was a member of the *Académie française*, and in recognition of his services Napoleon created him Imperial Count.

published. Besides which, says M. Taine, many important and characteristic letters have been omitted, which are transcribed in M. d'Haussonville's work entitled *L'Eglise romaine et le premier Empire.*

M. Taine adds:—

"In most instances, *say the editors*, we have been guided by the very simple idea that we were called upon to publish that alone which the Emperor would have made public."* The care displayed by M. Taine in placing on the lips of "the editors" the words signed by me cannot hurt me. Feelings of propriety doubtless induced him to make no mention of my name. Perhaps he recollected our former relations. Be it as it may, I consider it incumbent on me, by reason of the actual part I took in editing that publication, to give its history, and to disclose the share of responsibility belonging to each of its authors.

To Napoleon III. alone belongs the thought, suggested by his heart, of raising an imperishable monument to the memory of our uncle, by pub-

* *Correspondance de Napoleon I^er^*, t. vi. p. 4.

lishing his *Correspondance*, an inexhaustible collection of documents which throw light on that great period, an invaluable source of information for all those who may write the history of France from 1796 to 1815.

Napoleon thus expressed himself at St. Helena:—

"Those who have succeeded to me hold the archives of my administration, the records of my police, those of my tribunals. What have they published of all this, what have they disclosed?"

That wish has been carried out by Napoleon III.

It was no easy task, and gave rise to numerous objections. It was a work without precedent. However great the man may have been, was it prudent to expose his most intimate thoughts? The successor of Napoleon I. thought he could dare do it, and he was right.

Never had a similar work been undertaken before. What Government, what family even, whose member had been mixed up with the great events of the world, would be willing to take public opinion as confidant, not only of his acts, but also of his most intimate thoughts? That was a new and bold idea. The works of Frederic of Prussia have, it is true,

been published, but nearly all that relates to politics has been left out. They constitute a literary document, but not a collection of political teachings.

The method that was resorted to for the publication of the *Correspondance* was this. A commission having been appointed, it gave orders that all the public records of France should be searched for Napoleon's letters. In many cases the originals were missing: thus the letters addressed to generals, to public officials and to various other persons, had often been preserved by those to whom they were addressed. Fortunately that deficiency was supplied by the minutes which exist in nearly all cases. With the scrupulous care which characterized him, Napoleon, who scarcely ever wrote himself, preserved all the minutes of the letters he dictated. Whether he wrote from his study, from the countries he visited, or from the battle-fields, he always found the means of keeping his minutes, of which very few are missing.

The work of collection is complete as regards the public records of France.

Numerous circulars were addressed to Foreign Governments and to the private correspondents of the Emperor. The replies were soon forthcoming: they were sent with the utmost readiness, chiefly by the British Museum, the archives of Austria, of Russia, of Prussia, of Italy, of Sweden, and of Spain. These establishments and Governments even permitted the French officials to collate and verify their documents. There again, no omission exists. Every facsimile has been compared with the original, the dates and the orthography of the names have been checked by one of our officials, and the copy, thus duly certified, was sent to me with the most scrupulous exactitude.

As regards private individuals, the difficulties were greater. A large number of them threw open their family records, and authorized the verification of the documents. But it is impossible to assert that all the letters written by Napoleon have been communicated, for no action could be taken against careless or ill-disposed persons. For instance, the family of Bigot de Préameneu only communicated, I believe, a portion of the letters in its possession,

whereas it communicated a much larger number of them to Count d'Haussonville.*

Can I be held responsible for whatever omissions proceed from such restriction?

That preliminary work took some time.

For the first sixteen volumes, that is, for the period extending from the siege of Toulon to September 1, 1807, the method agreed upon for the selection of the documents was not exactly followed by the first commission. That selection was made rather at random.

Had all the letters been published, the result would have been tedious, crude, and sterile. For instance, when the Emperor gave an order to the major-general, he acquainted the Minister of War with it, and also informed the general of division, and often the colonel. Thus the same order is repeated four or five times. The same remark

* Joseph Otherim Bernard de Cléron, French Diplomatist and Politician, and author of numerous works, the most remarkable of which is *L'Église romaine et le premier Empire.* Count d'Haussonville married the daughter of the late Duc de Broglie, and like his father-in-law he was a staunch partisan of constitutional monarchy.

applies to his instructions to officials in the civil service. They were often addressed, at the same time to the Minister, to the prefect, and to the person whom they concerned; the same passages were often repeated. Some of the letters were quite devoid of interest; others, of a private nature contained allusions, the publication of which might have injured the recipients or their families.

Napoleon generally wrote in a special style, according to circumstances and to the person with whom he corresponded: he often exaggerated his thoughts in order to act on the latter. We possess undeniable proofs of that. Having one day written a very harsh letter to Marshal Baraguey d'Hilliers,* he also sent the following note to the Minister of War: "I vigorously rebuked Baraguey d'Hilliers. He partly deserved it. But I *exaggerated* (*j'ai forcé la note*), in order to startle him."

* Louis Baraguey d'Hilliers, one of the best generals of Napoleon, towards whom, however, the Emperor never felt any sympathy. He died in Berlin in 1812, from the grief caused him by his having been captured by the Russians, and thus excited the suspicion of Napoleon, who ordered an inquiry to be held as to his conduct.

It is necessary to know how Napoleon used to work. He got up almost every night, and, whilst walking about, he dictated for two or three hours to the secretary on duty—Bourrienne, Baron de Meneval, or Baron Fain. At the front, his aides-de-camp, or Berthier,* or Count Daru,† wrote under his dictation. After his second rest, about seven or eight o'clock in the morning, he perused the clean copies of his letters, which he signed, rarely introducing a correction in them.

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* Alexandre Berthier, Marshal of France, served in America under La Fayette and Rochambeau; in Vendée he was appointed chief of the staff to General Lükner, in which capacity he went to Italy. He followed Bonaparte to Egypt. After the 18th Brumaire, he was appointed Minister of War and successively raised by Napoleon to the dignity of Sovereign Prince of Neufchâtel, and Prince of Wagram. Notwithstanding the friendship shown towards him by Napoleon, Marshal Berthier was amongst the first dignitaries of the Empire to acknowledge the Restoration, in recognition for which he was created Peer of France by Louis XVIII.

† Pierre Antoine Noël Matthieu Bruno Daru, officer, administrator, politician, statesman and distinguished writer. Napoleon created him Count in 1819. Louis XVIII. raised Count Daru to the peerage. Daru was President of the *Académie Française*. He is the author of a translation of Cicero's *Orator* and of one of the works of Horace, of numerous historical essays, and of series of important political speeches.

It is marvellous to conceive how that matchless genius could, though hardly ever consulting any document, remember the place occupied by the last company, the structure of strongholds, the effective strength of his armies to a man, their positions, the various roads and the time it took to follow them, and dictate his orders spontaneously! And yet it is a fact.

Notwithstanding the goodwill of the first commission, confusion arose and incontestable mistakes followed. Napoleon III. was struck by it. I often talked with him on that subject, and, one day, he said to me: "I am dissatisfied with the labours of the commission entrusted with editing the *Correspondance*; will you superintend it?" I gladly assented, but I made my own terms.

On principle I pointed out that, as the heirs of Napoleon, we should, in the first place, be inspired by his own wishes, and depict him under the colours in which he, himself, would have desired to appear. Can it be admitted that his intentions should have been ignored by his own descendants?

Such is the general object I had in view. Yet I declare, on my conscience, that no document casting

any light on history has been omitted. With regard to the unfortunate affair of the Duke d'Enghien, everything was published. Napoleon I. had authorized us to do so. Indeed, in an addition made to his will at St. Helena, he said :

"I caused the Duke d'Enghien to be arrested and tried, because it was necessary to the safety, the interest, and the honour of the French people, at a time when Count d'Artois, as he himself admitted, maintained sixty paid assassins in Paris. Were I placed in similar circumstances, I should do the same thing again."

The foregoing addition was written between the lines—as may be seen in the original, preserved in the national archives—after an article on the Duke d'Enghien, published in an English review, and denouncing in outrageous terms the Dukes of Vicenza* and of Rovigo,† had been read to the Emperor. Napoleon was anxious to defend his generals and to decide the responsibility of that act. "It is disgraceful!" he exclaimed, "bring me my will." He opened the document, and, disdaining ambi-

* General Cauldincourt. † General Savary.

guity, making no mention of the precipitation with which everything—contrary to his wishes—was done, and which did not permit of his being acquainted with the result of the prisoner's trial at Vincennes before the execution of the sentence, omitting even to speak of the intention he had of pardoning the unfortunate prince, he wrote the lines I have quoted above. That was, indeed, a generous impulse towards his agents. That is why I did not hesitate to publish in the *Correspondance* all that related to that grievous affair.

Savary, Duke of Rovigo, who played an important part in the affair of the Duke d'Enghien, gives full details of it in his *Mémoires*, published towards the close of the Restoration. Those *Mémoires* were written at Malta, where Savary was the prisoner of England, and at Smyrna, where he took refuge in 1816. They furnish particulars of no great military value, except as regards the battle of Ostrolenka, fought in 1812, during the Russian war, and at which the author covered himself with glory. The Duke of Rovigo was a man of a shrewd though not lofty mind. He was an admirable leader for the *gendarmerie.* Fouché, to whom Savary succeeded as

Minister of Police—without, however, replacing him—was the bugbear (*bête noire*) of the latter. He was as clever and as perfidious as Savary was honest and short-sighted. The absolute devotion of Savary to the Emperor often makes him unjust towards all those of whom Napoleon had to complain. Be it as it may, the *Mémoires* of the Duke of Rovigo, by reason of his historic character and of his truthfulness, constitute a document well worth consulting.

I knew him personally in Italy, which he visited in 1830. He was then fifty-six years old, very tall, bald-headed and with energetic features. The Duchess of Rovigo, *née* de Fandoas, was very handsome. They had several children, amongst them four daughters, who accompanied their parents to Italy. One of them, Marie, who afterwards married M. Serlay, colonel of artillery, was remarkably handsome. The Duke of Rovigo spent the summer of 1830 at my father's, at a country-seat called *Colle Ameno*, near Ancona. I was only eight years old, but his long conversations left with me a very vivid recollection.

He it was who, one day, on returning from Ancona, informed us of the Revolution of 1830 and of the

return of the tricolour flag. I remember that, on hearing this news, my mother, with deep enthusiasm, took us in her arms, my sister and me, and kissed us whilst exclaiming: "At last our exile will cease, and you shall be little Frenchmen! (*petits Français!*)" That was, alas, an illusion. We had to wait eighteen years before becoming French again, and our exile only ceased at the fall of the Government which established itself in July 1830, and whose accession my mother had hailed with that hope. These details concerning the Duke of Rovigo do not seem to me out of place as a sequel to the exposing of the reasons which led me to insert, in the *Correspondance de l'Empereur*, documents relative to an affair with which that general was so closely connected.

The publication of the letters concerning Louis, King of Holland, added a fresh proof of the equitable spirit of Napoleon III. That sovereign was anxious that the intentions of Napoleon should be respected, even though they they might prove detrimental to his own father. Seeing that I have been twitted with having deprived history of documents injurious to my family, I shall publish here the only letter that, in accordance with a feeling which everybody will

appreciate, I did not deem it advisable to insert in the *Correspondance*, under the reign of the son of the ex-King of Holland. That letter is magnificent, it is both grand and touching. In its stern severity, it does not contain anything likely to offend or to injure the memory of Louis Bonaparte; while that of Napoleon I. will not lose anything by its being made public. There was, therefore, not the slightest political reason for withholding it: quite the reverse. It was merely out of deference to Napoleon III., and in order not to appear to take advantage of his self-denial, that it was not published in the *Correspondance*.

It runs thus:—

To Louis Napoleon, King of Holland,
Amsterdam.

Ostend, May 20, 1808.

"My brother,—I received your letter of May 16. In our present position, it is best to speak frankly. You know that I often read documents of yours which were not written to be placed before my eyes. I am aware of your most secret dispositions,

notwithstanding all you may say to the contrary. You had better not speak of your sentiments or of your childhood. Experience has taught me what reliance is to be placed on them.

"Holland is, it is true, in a grievous state. I conceive your anxiety to get out of it; but I am surprised that you should apply to me on the subject. I cannot help you, you alone can help yourself. When you conduct yourself so as to persuade your Dutch subjects that you act upon my inspiration, that all your steps, all your views, are in keeping with mine, you will then be loved and esteemed, and will acquire the necessary prestige for re-constituting Holland. It is that illusion which still imparts some strength to your throne. The journey you made to Paris, your return with the Queen, and other reasons, lead your people to think that it is still possible that you may again follow my system and rule after my spirit. Yet, you alone can confirm that hope and cause all doubts to vanish.

"There is not one of your actions which your stout Dutchmen do not appreciate as they do a money-matter or a commercial transaction, therefore they fully know what to think of you. When the

fact of being the friend of France and mine shall constitute a title for being welcomed at your court, all Holland will notice it, all Holland will breathe again, all Holland will recover its natural position. It all rests on you, you alone. Since your return, you have done nothing for it. Do you wish to know what will be the result of your conduct? Your subjects, finding that they have to choose between France and England, and not knowing what to hope for, will throw themselves into the arms of France and loudly demand their annexation as a protection from so much uncertainty and so many whims. Your Government wishes to be paternal, but it is only weak. In Brabant and Zealand, I only met with the most incoherent administration. In Zealand itself, where everything is thoroughly Dutch, people are satisfied to belong to a great country, and to be spared an unsteadiness of purpose quite inconceivable in such a nation. Do you think the letter you caused to be written to Mollerus* and the assurance

* Jean Henri Mollerus, a distinguished Dutch statesman. After having vainly endeavoured to secure the interests of the House of Orange, he served King Louis, and after the annexation of Holland to France, he was sent as deputy to the *Corps*

you give him of your affection, at the very moment you dismiss him, are calculated to secure for you the consideration of the country? Undeceive yourself. Everybody knows that without me there is neither security nor credit, and that, but for me, you are nothing. How can I help it, if the example you had in Paris, and your knowledge of my character—which is to go straight to the aim I have in view, without allowing any consideration to stop me—did not alter your ways and enlighten you? Being, as I am, in possession of the navigable portions of the Meuse and of the Rhine as far as their mouths, I can dispense with Holland, whereas the latter cannot dispense with my protection. If, subjected as she is to the rule of one of my brothers, and expecting her safety from me alone, Holland does not find my own likeness in her King, if I do not speak by your mouth, all confidence in your Government will vanish. You are destroying your own authority. Be convinced that no one can be deceived. Do you wish to enter on the right path of politics? Love France and my

Législatif. When, after the fall of Napoleon, the House of Nassau ascended the throne of Holland, Mollerus was entrusted with the direction of the War Office.

glory. That is the only way of serving the King of Holland. Under the rule of a king the Dutch lost the advantages of a free Government. You were, therefore, regarded by them as a harbour of refuge. That hope has been foolishly deceived by you. You have sunk rocks in the harbour. Do you know why you were the harbour for Holland. Because you were the bond of a lasting union with France, the guarantee of a common interest between us. Had Holland become, thanks to you, a portion of my empire, so to say, it would have been as dear to me as my own provinces, seeing that I gave her a prince who was almost my son. If you were what you ought to be, I should feel as much interest in Holland as I do in France, I should take her prosperity as much to heart as I do that of France. Indeed, when I placed you on the throne of Holland, I thought I was placing there a French citizen as devoted to the greatness of France, and as jealous of all that concerned the mother country, as I am myself. Had you followed that plan of conduct, you would to-day be the king of six million subjects.

"I should have considered the kingdom of Holland as a foundation to which I should have added Ham-

burg, Osnabrück and a portion of North Germany, seeing that it would thus have formed a nucleus of peoples which would have still more disorganized the German spirit of unity—the chief aim of my policy. Far from doing so, you followed quite a different line. I was compelled to forbid you access to France and to seize a portion of your possessions. You do not utter a word in your councils, you do not express a thought, but it is divulged at once to the public, it turns against you and lowers you. For, in the eyes of the Dutch, you are still a Frenchman who has only resided four years in their midst. They see in you nothing but me, and the advantage of being protected against the robbers and inferior agitators who have subjected them to all sorts of vexations since the conquest. When you show yourself the adversary of France, you are less for them than a Prince of Orange to whom they owe the rank of a nation and a long era of prosperity and glory. Holland is satisfied that your hostile attitude against France caused them to lose what they would not have lost under Schimmelpenninck* or under a Prince of Orange. Be,

* Rutger Jean Schimmelpenninck, the last grand pensioner of Holland. He was ambassador to France and to England

above all things, a Frenchman and the Emperor's brother, and you may rely on being in the right path for Holland's interests.

"But what is the good of all this? Fate has decided that you should be incorrigible. You wish already to drive away the few Frenchmen who are still with you. Counsel, advice, affection are powerless to act on you. You will only give way to force and threats. What is the meaning of those mysterious prayers and fasts you have ordered? Louis, you do not wish to reign long. All your acts disclose the feelings of your soul, even better than your private letters. Listen to a man who knows more than yourself.

"Leave the wrong path in which you have entered. Be truly a Frenchman at heart, or your people will expel you, and you will leave Holland as the object of the scorn and pity of the Dutch. States are ruled by reason and policy, not by a vitiated and acrimonious temper (*non avec une lymphe âcre et viciée*).

"NAPOLÉON."

after the signing of the Peace of Amiens. After the accession of King Louis, Schimmelpenninck was created Imperial Count and appointed Senator by Napoleon.

That is the letter which motives of propriety, which no longer exist to-day, induced me not to publish under the Empire. That is my crime.

Whatever else has been omitted from the *Correspondance* relates either to repetitions or to insignificant letters. Faithful to his systematic hostility, M. Taine in vain insinuates the contrary. Let him prove what he advances. Let him name the scholar who studied so assiduously the *Correspondance* and whose testimony he appeals to. A witness must give his name. From whom did M. Taine have his information? Since he is usually so particular, and inspects everything with his magnifying glass, where did he see that the *Correspondance* contains thirty thousand documents, whereas it only numbers twenty-two thousand and sixty-seven, besides four volumes of the St. Helena papers, without numbers? Where did he see that there are, in all, about eighty thousand papers written or dictated by Napoleon, out of which twenty thousand are still unpublished, and thirty thousand have been left out for motives of propriety or of policy?

History cannot be written by conjectures and

without proofs. Hatred alone can be satisfied with insinuations, approximations, and hypotheses.

At the time I assumed the direction of the *Correspondance*, I insisted on modifying the composition of the Commission. I caused two important members of it—Marshal Vaillant * and Mérimée †—to be eliminated. The Marshal was a clever man, but I rather distrusted his political views. He had

* Jean Baptiste Philibert Vaillant, a distinguished French officer. Served in Russia, Germany, and during the campaign of France under Napoleon I. He took a brilliant part in the conquest of Algeria, and in the siege of Antwerp. Napoleon III. created him a Count, Grand Marshal of the Palace, and after the expedition of Italy in 1859, Vaillant was entrusted with the direction of the War Office. He was President of the Committee of artillery and engineering for the defence of Paris.

† Prosper Mérimée, son of Jean François Leonor Mérimée, an artist of talent, entered the Civil Service, and rapidly rose to be Surveyor of Historical Buildings. He, however, devoted the leisure left him by his official position to the pursuit of his favourite occupations—literature, and the study of archæology. As a writer he is best known by the following works: *La Chronique du Temps de Charles IX.*; *Colomba*; an essay on Corsican manners; an essay on the social wars of the Romans; a series of excellent studies on architecture, painting, and sculpture; a collection of matchless letters; and various capital translations from the Russian, chiefly from Turgueneff. He was a member of the *Académie Française*, and was made a Senator by Napoleon III.

been aide-de-camp to General Haxo,* one of Moreau's lieutenants with the Army of the Rhine, and had preserved the prejudices of some of the officers of that army. Marshal Vaillant married the widow of General Haxo, and Madame Vaillant, wife of the Minister of the Emperor's household, never visited the Tuileries. Fortunately the tyranny of Napoleon III. was not very great towards his great officers of State. Some lively scenes had taken place between the Marshal and me. He was a Roman Count,† but never boasted of it, and disliked all allusions to that title. Besides, the Marshal did not quarrel only with me: he was blunt and brutal towards everybody but the Emperor.

During the Empire, we disagreed on nearly all questions: the siege of Rome, in 1849; the expedition to Mexico; the war of 1870. One day in July

* François Nicolas Benoît, Baron Haxo, a French military engineer, was surnamed the Vauban of the Nineteenth Century. After serving in all the campaigns of Napoleon, he was raised to the rank of General of Division for his fine conduct at the battle of Moskowa. Louis Philippe raised him to the peerage, and entrusted him with the duty of fortifying Lyons and other places. He died in 1838.

† A title conferred on him by the Pope.

1870, as we were both leaving the Tuileries, I addressed him in the following terms:

"How, Marshal, can you thus urge the Emperor to war? Does not your military knowledge cause you to hesitate in the face of such an undertaking?"

He replied to me:

"I know not whether this war will prove advantageous or not, but the Master seems to wish for it, everybody leads him to it, and, all other considerations put aside, I am anxious to be always of his mind; he fascinates me (*il me méduse*)!"

Mérimée was a sceptic and a cynic. He delighted in making game of everything and of everybody, and especially of Napoleon I. The following is an instance of it. One of the letters written by Napoleon to Fouché, in 1807, one of those for the omission of which I have been so violently reproached, began with the following sentences:

"What is all this gossip in Paris concerning the accouchement of Madame ——? People say the child is mine, please deny it . . ." And the Emperor jocularly pointed out the reasons why he could not be held responsible for that event. That is the kind of thing M. Mérimée thought piquant. He was

very anxious that the letter should be published with the lady's name. It is quite correct that it was I who opposed my *veto* to that publication. I was indignant to see such a disposition on the part of a collaborator in a serious work.

I insisted on obtaining the resignation of those two members.

Sainte-Beuve* was also a member of the Commission. I was intimately acquainted with him. I was aware that he entertained but little admiration for Napoleon. He was a man of a fascinating though chiefly critical mind, whose ideas of government were socialistic. I requested the Emperor to give me time to reflect before excluding Sainte-Beuve, and, in the meantime, I had long conversations with the latter on the subject of the task I was about to undertake. I explained to him the aim I had in view, I told him what spirit and what feelings I intended to display in its pursuit, and asked him honestly whether he wished

* Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, a charming poet and eminent literary critic, the author of the famous *Lundis*, a series of criticisms sparkling with wit and humour. He was a freethinker towards the close of his life, and was on intimate terms with the most illustrious *littérateurs* of his time.

to help or to oppose me. He held out his hand to me and said : "Everything considered, you are better acquainted with Napoleon than I who did not study him specially. You have a mission to fulfil, and if you will accept my collaboration, I will do my best to assist you." Indeed, we never disagreed ; our friendship was deep and lasting. I used to go and spend long hours in his small lodgings in the rue Montparnasse. I visited him assiduously during his illness. I much regretted his loss. After his death Sainte-Beuve was not replaced in the Commission of the *Correspondance.*

As *Directeur des Archives** M. de Laborde was naturally entitled to a seat in the Commission. I always found him anxious to help and full of courtesy, although very indifferent as a political friend. After his death he was replaced by M. Alfred Maury, the almost universal scholar.

Amédée Thierry, the eminent historian, a man of good judgment and agreeable intercourse, and General Favé, the true type of the French officer, affable, educated, diligent, full of kindness, ardent in his

* The Curator of National Records.

patriotism, and whose political views were very similar to mine, completed the Commission.

I am happy to render this public testimony to my collaborators.

In 1869 political events succeeded one another with great rapidity. The parliamentary elections bore witness to a great desire for home reforms. At the same time, the unsettled situation created in Europe by the war of 1866, and the ambition of Prussia, was gathering clouds on the horizon of foreign relations. I was uneasy. I foresaw the impending crisis, and hastened to finish my task. I did not lose a single day, and, thanks to our labours, the *Correspondance* was brought to a conclusion in 1869, a few months before the catastrophe.

I will point out, by the way, that, quite contrary to our administrative habits, the estimate allowed for the work, far from being exceeded, was not even reached.

In order to convey a general idea of the *Correspondance*, I transcribe here a few extracts from my final report :—

" Our work is done : we have brought to a successful issue the publication of the *Correspondance de*

l'Empereur Napoléon I^er. The thirty-second, and last, volume is out. . . .

"On September 7, 1854, a decree was signed instituting a Commission entrusted with the publication of the *Correspondance de Napoléon I^er.* . . .

"The personality of Napoleon I., his institutions, and his reign, have been the subjects of a wonderful number of French and foreign publications—books, pamphlets, and memoirs. All those works have been carefully examined, as also all contemporary newspapers, and we have searched all printed documents —the character of which gave a guarantee of their being reliable—for indications of a nature to enable us to trace the letters we did not possess. Those printed sources thus enabled us to make fresh and useful researches, and to find out many errors and erroneous dates. Except in very few cases, we abstained from reproducing any printed letter whose original text could not be found, the Commission having decided to accept only the documents of which it had consulted the original, the minute, or some duly authenticated copy.

"The documents thus brought together soon became so voluminous that it would have been im-

possible to publish them all. Napoleon not only ruled, but superintended personally all the details of a vast administration. He did not confine himself to giving orders, he watched over their execution, and called to account those of his officials who were responsible for it. Hence arose a multitude of letters which are but the repetition of those he had written previously, as also communications relating to such special details, and of such transient importance, that they can hardly be considered as possessing historical value. Being obliged to make a choice, the Commission rejected that portion of the *Correspondance*, the interest of which was so subordinate; or, at least, it only preserved those official or private letters containing points likely to give an idea of the proportions and of the variety of the work achieved by Napoleon I., and to point out the deep judgment and the vigilance he displayed in the most insignificant as in the most important things. Such was the reason which, as related in its Report of 1858, led the first Commission to declare its intention of not inserting in the collected *Correspondance* the writings belonging to either of the three following classes:—

"1st. The documents which should find a place in the complete works of Napoleon I.

"2nd. The letters reproducing orders already given in some previous communication, and, therefore, constituting repetitions.

"3rd. The letters of a purely private character.

"On February 3, 1864, a new Commission—that to which we have the honour to belong—was instituted by Your Majesty, and took in hand the work already begun. That Commission included, as an indispensable appendix to the *Correspondance*, the writings of Napoleon I. at St. Helena. It also deemed it advisable to publish family letters, or others of a private nature, whenever they contained some characteristic point likely to bring out one of the manifold sides of the grand personality of the Emperor Napoleon I., so mighty and so varied in its aptitudes. Yet, whilst *extending* the limits of the outline adopted in 1858, the new Commission never lost sight of the rule prescribed for its work by the institutive decree of 1854, the opening article of which is worded thus :

"'A Commission is instituted to collect, classify,

and publish the *Correspondance* of our august predecessor, Napoleon I., concerning the various branches of *public interest.*'

"The men who study seriously the history of the Empire will acknowledge that our collection contains documents illustrating every phase, every period, every shade of the actions of Napoleon I., and that we have not omitted a single document of importance in that direction.

"As pointed out above, the writings of Napoleon I. at St. Helena seemed to us to form the natural and indispensable complement of his *Correspondance,* and, in sorting his writings, we selected those whose authenticity was established either by undeniable notoriety, or by corrections and notes in the Emperor's own handwriting, for the Commission was fortunate enough to procure several of those rare holographs which prove their own identity in the eyes of posterity.

"When publishing the thirty-second and final volume, the Commission had to solve two important questions, the first of which was to know whether a supplement should be given, containing some of the letters communicated since the publication of the

volumes in which they ought to have been inserted according to their date, and the second to decide whether an analytical index should be added. A negative reply has been given in each case.

"The letters discovered after the printing of the volumes to which they belonged, according to the chronological order, are pretty numerous, and, in some cases, possess a certain interest. However, after a careful examination, we came to the conclusion that they did not add anything essential to the facts disclosed in the letters already published. . . .

"At all events, one is never sure of the completeness of a collection like this, for one cannot affirm that *all* the letters have been found, and that continued researches shall not bring fresh ones to light, purposely concealed until then, or forgotten by their owners.

* * * * *

"President :

"NAPOLÉON.

"Members of the Commission :

"GENERAL FAVÉ,

"ALFRED MAURY.

"Paris, 1869." "AMÉDÉE THIERRY.

I do not pretend to have done a perfect work, but I can guarantee the sincerity, the uprightness, and the truthfulness with which I performed my task.

Only dishonest men, whose superficial minds are biassed by party spirit, can expect the truth from Bourrienne, Madame de Rémusat, Lanfrey, and similar libellers, rather than in the genuine documents proceeding from Napoleon himself, and unreservedly subjected to the judgment of history.

I feel convinced that the *Correspondance de Napoléon I^er^*, and the four volumes containing the St. Helena writings, constitute a matchless mass of evidence which alone will permit of our appreciating accurately the true character of the Emperor.

THE MAN AND HIS WORK.

I HAVE been studying Napoleon ever since I began to think for myself. I do not pretend to judge him in a few pages, but I wish to assist in acquainting people with that extraordinary man whose life, thoughts, and deeds have formed the subject of my meditations.

Napoleon was of a complex nature.* His character retained the imprint of the ideas he received and in the midst of which he lived. His natural genius adapted itself to the circumstances that favoured its development. He rose with his fortune, assimilated himself with the nations he ruled, and modified himself with wonderful mental flexibility. To form a general judgment on him, to esti-

* Dryden expresses a similar nature in the following lines—

"A man so various that he seemed to be,
Not one, but all mankind's epitome."

mate his character by bringing together his opinions and his actions at the different periods of his life, and thus indulge in perpetual anachronism, is to fail to appreciate reality; it is to forge history. Napoleon is not a god whose first cry and last utterance are a revelation. He is a great man, but a man nevertheless.

Napoleon was born in Corsica, at a time when that hitherto indomitable and proud island, "which never produced slaves," was still writhing under the yoke of foreign rule.

Everything recalled to his imagination, his mind, and his heart the struggles for independence and the heroes who sacrificed their lives for it. He saw around him only armed men accustomed to be free. From the beginning of the history of Corsica, liberty has been her chief necessity. Having spontaneously grouped themselves round a few families older, wealthier, or more esteemed for their bravery or for their patriotism than the rest, the Corsicans formed a true democracy ruled by the best amongst its members. Bold, of sober habits, possessed of all the fiery passions of primitive peoples whom civilization has neither tamed nor

Ceci est mon testament
écrit tout entier de
ma propre main

Napoleon

Ceci est mon Testament, écrit tout entier de ma propre main.

NAPOLÉON.

This is my Will, written throughout with my own hand.

NAPOLEON.

FACSIMILE OF THE LAST CLAUSE OF NAPOLEON'S WILL, WITH HIS SIGNATURE.

(*Reproduced from Sainsbury's "Napoleon Museum."*)

corrupted, they submitted with impatience to a domination brought upon them by their internal discords.

In order to make Frenchmen of the young Corsicans of the rising generation, France chiefly relied on the education they would receive in her schools and in her armies. Fascinated by the advantages his children were likely to derive from his decision, Charles Bonaparte gave his sons and daughters to France, and Napoleon, at the age at which we begin to be sensitive, that is, to suffer, found himself suddenly transferred into a foreign atmosphere. He was poor, of a vanquished race, his language, his education, and his habits, everything in fact tended to isolate him. At school he had to contend with that school-boy hostility which children can render unbearable. He had to learn a foreign tongue at the same time that he acquainted himself with a new world. At first, that society must have been hateful to him, and in the various schools through which he passed he remained a Corsican. His thoughts were ever wandering to the mountains where men are free; to the grotto where the noise of the sea formerly used to lull his

reverie, to the country where his *mother* still lived, that mother, who, during all his life, was the object of the deepest affection of his heart, and to whom, later, and as the best and highest title, he himself gave, and caused the whole world to give, the name of *Madame Mère.* He sprang essentially from her. His impulses, his religious sentiments, his resolution, and the calmness of his soul in the midst of the greatest dangers, he borrowed from her. His features were like his mother's. Like her, he possessed that unshakeable stoicism which led the thrifty and saving woman to give up, without any regret, her dwelling and her property for the sake of an idea, and gave her the courage of witnessing, without shedding a tear, the burning of her house. What mattered to her, banishment and exile, when duty compelled ?

It was also duty which bade Napoleon stay in France and learn to be a man. His mother wished him to do so, and though in France, the child cherished his projects and his dreams. He devoted himself to the freedom, to the equality, to the independence, to the amelioration of men's fate. He read Rousseau, and that philosopher's work exercised a

powerful influence over his mind. Like Rousseau, he became a theist, and aspired to relieve the disinherited and the lowly of this world. Like him, he dreamed of free societies. Therefore, Corsica, that island of which Rousseau spoke, and for which he had been requested to frame a constitution, made the union closer still between the philosopher and his disciple. What did he not read during the leisure left him by his military duties? After reading he was in the habit of penning a few short notes, some passages worth remembering, some personal comments. He thus reviewed everything: history, politics, religion. He was captivated by the study of the East, which Raynal* had urgently suggested, and he analysed at length the *Histoire des établisse-*

* Guillaume Thomas François Raynal, having been brought up by the Jesuits, entered Holy Orders. But finding no taste for his ecclesiastical functions, he secured his appointment on the staff of the *Mercure de France*, where he displayed remarkable literary talent, and rapidly rose to fame and fortune. His best known works are: *Anecdotes historiques, militaires et politiques de l'Europe*, 3 vols. 12mo, Amsterdam, 1753; *Le divorce de Henri VIII. et de Catherine d'Aragon* (1763); and *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissements et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* (4 vols. 8vo, 1770), until recently a standard work on the subject. Diderot and Holbach contributed to this last work.

ments des Européens dans les deux Indes. It pleased him very much, and he took it up again. Had he already foreseen that he also was to witness, under a clear sky, the rising of his star over the Pyramids? He was acquainted with the manners and customs, and with the ethnography of the East. He used to transcribe what he learned of history and geography in little note-books. Sometimes he would also try his hand at some oriental story. He studied, with equal ardour, theology, legislation, and all the sciences of Government. His mind evinced universal and insuperable curiosity, and its accuracy was surprising. He then began to write, but his style is not trained to those niceties which delight the *literati.* Although always savouring of declamation, it is clear and precise, and bears traces of a memory on which everything—men, things, words and actions—leaves its impress. Although the tool does not yet obey the impulse of its master, the mind of the latter is already ripe.

The Revolution broke out, it captivated him, and it made a Frenchman of him. His race, his inclinations, his studies, his trials and his passions, all led him towards democracy. Everything carried him

towards the Republic; he expected and longed for it, he hailed and welcomed it. For its sake, he then forsakes what until that moment he liked best —Corsica. For its sake he is proscribed, and his first writings are in its favour. The education he received made a professional soldier of him, and, already, he expresses certain views on military art. He does not hesitate for a moment as to the line of conduct he should follow. Between France and monarchy, he chooses France. In the first ranks of the Republican armies there are Corsicans. What Corsicans—with the exception of one family—fight in the ranks of the *émigrés*? What! because Bonaparte was brought up in a royal academy, did he fail in his duty by not deserting? What! is it a crime on the part of all the officers, his comrades, to have declined to serve in the ranks of the Allies, but rather to have fought and conquered for their country! What sort of blood is indeed running in the veins of those who dare consider treason to the country as a virtue, and brand fidelity to the flag as a disgrace? Bonaparte, soldier of the Convention, shot down the Marseilles insurgents. He captured rebel Toulon, and on the

occasion of a Paris rising, he asserted with cannon the rights of the Republic against the monarchy. The moment was doubtless solemn, the fate of the country was on the point of being entrusted to an obscure officer twenty-seven years old. Bonaparte must have discussed the matter within himself. Like many other soldiers, he was horrified at useless crimes, at *guillotinades** and assassinations concealed under a so-called legal form. But the unity of France and the integrity of her territory were at stake ; and had the general deserted who was appointed to the command of the *sections*†, the work of the Revolution would have been fruitless.

The reaction was triumphant, and Bonaparte knew fully what justice would have been meted out to citizens and soldiers by the Royalists. In a few minutes the reaction was crushed. Thus Bonaparte's decision saved the Revolution. After Vendémiaire,‡ he rises to great things. He is car-

* The wholesale executions of the Reign of Terror.

† The armed forces that supported the Government against the Royalists.

‡ Vendémiaire 12, year IV. (October 4, 1795), when Bonaparte crushed at Saint Roch the Royalist rising which threatened the existence of the National Convention.

ried along by events, and his genius always rises to their level. Previous to Arcola, he is but a general favoured by victory, whose sole object is to bring about the enemy's defeat. As a military man he has no equal. After Arcola, he ranks on a par with the cleverest politicians. As an administrator, he organizes a great nation, and, striking Italy with his sword, he makes a second mother-country of it. Henceforth, his ambition equals his success. Wherever it may lead him, his genius will be equal to any emergency.

Yet he will not go headlong into adventures which may give him ephemeral greatness, whilst compromising the future. He saw the danger threatening France and the Republic. At the head of, and with the glorious army in Italy, he protested against the designs of royalism. Hoche * having failed to

* Louis Lazare Hoche, one of the noblest figures of the Revolution. His military aptitudes were only equalled by those of Bonaparte. His gallantry and political probity were proverbial. Owing to his spirit of moderation and justice he succeeded in pacifying completely Vendée, in 1794, which, until then had been in a constant state of rebellion against the Republic. He died in his camp at Wetzlar, September 19 1797, aged 29. His premature death and the suspicious

carry out the *coup d'état*, the idea of which he had accepted, Bonaparte allowed Augereau * to start for Paris in Fructidor. It did not suit him to be personally mixed up with that event.† He reserved himself for some better opportunity; he meditated, he pondered, he knew how to wait.

He still waited after Campo-Formio. To have stayed in Paris amidst the intrigues of rival factions, and to have supported either of them, would have been turning his glory to useless advantage. The continent is pacified, British oligarchy alone is

symptoms which brought it about aroused the belief that he had been poisoned.

* Pierre François Charles Augereau, duke of Castiglione, Marshal and Peer of France, was of obscure parentage. His intrepidity and his decision made him one of the best lieutenants of Napoleon, who heaped favours upon him. He shared with Bonaparte the honour of Arcola, and crushed the Royalists in Fructidor. He played a glorious part in the battles of Jena and Eylau, and did wonders at the battle of Leipzig. In private life he was coarse and not always scrupulous in the means of acquiring money. After 1814, he embraced the cause of Louis XVIII., who created him Peer of France.

† The *coup d'état* of Fructidor 18, year V. (September 4th, 1797), by which the Republican majority of the Directory (Barras, Laréveillère, and Rewbell) saved the country from the Royalist Restoration plotted by Pichegru and his accomplices.

preparing new coalitions: that is the enemy that subsidizes kings and excites peoples against France. But means are wanting to invade England. Hoche's expedition to Ireland has failed, and the English fleet is watching. Time, money, and much power, are needed to carry out the undertaking. England may be vanquished elsewhere than on her own soil. Once crushed in India, she would be conquered. The blow must be struck there. Besides, does not the East—that East of which he has been dreaming from his youth, and to which he was once tempted to offer his sword—exercise over Bonaparte the same fascination it exercised in the past over Alexander and Cæsar? He puts his foot where they put theirs. Alexandria witnesses his victory as it did theirs. Then begins that campaign which strikes imagination with wonder, and imparts new life to a country seemingly dead for centuries. And there that Corsican, that little Corsican who, we are told, knows nothing, and never read anything, became an Egyptian, as, a short time before, he had known how to become an Italian. He is thoroughly acquainted with Egypt; he knows her manners, her religion, her ways, and customs.

He gives her laws, and with Monge,* Berthollet,† and the other savants who accompanied him, he makes excavations. He creates schools and factories, he manufactures guns and pencils, he starts newspapers and pharmaceutical stores. His knowledge is universal, and he knows how to secure from each of the men who accompany him the smallest particle of genius likely to serve his projects. What are indeed those projects? Does he already contemplate cutting out for himself, in Italy or in Egypt, a kingdom with his sword, according to the fashion of those *condottieri*, to whom he is likened? Nay, he works for France, she enlists all his thoughts. In Italy he founded a republic, sister of the French Republic, in order to oppose to the system of the

* Gaspard Monge, Count de Péluse, famous French mathematician and chief founder of the *École Polytechnique*. Napoleon created him a Senator, and gave him his title in recognition of his services to science whilst exploring the ruins of Pelusium in Lower Egypt. He was the intimate friend of Berthollet, and his attachment for Napoleon was the cause of his losing his official position and appointments, and being reduced almost to misery.

† Claude Louis, Count Berthollet, eminent French chemist and author of numerous scientific discoveries, chiefly connected with dyeing. Although he owed much to Napoleon, he voted in favour of his overthrow in 1814.

monarchical alliances of old Europe the democratic union of nations. In Egypt he intended to give France, as suggested before by Leibnitz, an immense territory, of unheard-of fertility, under a healthy climate, and the possession of which ensured our domination over the Mediterranean, at the same time as it opened to us the road to India. What was wanted in order to succeed? That the peace concluded at Campo-Formio should last a few months longer, that the incapable Government of the Directory should not furnish any immediate pretext for new coalitions; that it should not send to foreign courts so-called diplomatists, each utterance of whom was a provocation ; that it should not, by means of odious ransoms, exhaust the resources of our allies; that it should not squander wilfully the treasure conquered by Bonaparte; that, in short, it should not, by repeated crimes, by constant extortions, bring to the edge of the abyss that France which Bonaparte had left victorious and respected.

To make matters worse, Egypt, which had just been conquered, had to be protected against a double invasion. Her fate had to be decided in Syria. There, Bonaparte encountered a first Turkish army.

He dispersed, defeated, and crushed it, but could not achieve his conquest: St. Jean d'Acre opposes his progress, and he must hasten back. Another hostile army is about to land, which it did, indeed, only to be annihilated.

The battle of Aboukir saved Egypt, and now invaded France must be saved. Bonaparte leaves Africa, he lands at Frejus and arrives in Paris. There he finds the Government plotting against itself, and having already entered into a compact with Royalty, reaction menacing, and Jacobinism rampant. They all welcomed him. They all pressed him to deliver the country from a ruinous and suicidal *régime*. He again reflects as in Vendémiaire. As in those days, the alternative is terrible. To save the nation, it has become necessary to overthrow a lawful institution which, though already rotten, and having, it is true, deviated from its object, is still nevertheless in force. Legality—a legality violated by three *coups d'état*, must be put aside. The question is whether to perish with that fetish of a constitution, or to upset it in order to live. The most eminent men, those who are most noted for their patriotism and talents, and who are not yet pro-

scribed, two *Directeurs*,* a portion of the Council of the *Cinq-Cents*,† the majority of the *Anciens*, appeal to, implore, and beseech the General to act. The whole army, the whole people, are with him. On the 18th of Brumaire, Bonaparte saves France from the Royalist plot and from Jacobin terror.

Is it necessary to point out what was then the state of our country? Our armies were defeated; our civil service no longer existed; our treasury only contained 160,000 francs ;‡ our public roads, having long been left out of repair, were impassable, and infested by gangs of robbers who no longer concealed their acts under the mask of political reprisals; our hospitals were plundered by those to whose care they were entrusted; and public buildings were falling to pieces. France was going back to barbarism, having lost all ideal and all morality, she was rushing fast to absolute anarchy.

* The title given to the members of the Directory, five in number.

† Instituted by the Constitution of the year III. (1794), was composed of five hundred members—hence its name—and formed with the Council of the Elders (*Anciens*) the Legislature.

‡ About £6,400.

Bonaparte assumes power. From the very first day he entered the room where the acting-consuls were deliberating, Sieyès* could say with truth : "We have a master who knows what to do, and who can and will do it" ("*Nous avons un maître qui sait tout faire, qui peut tout faire, et qui veut tout faire*"). The law of hostages was abolished, the list of *émigrés* was closed, and the exiles, amongst whom were Carnot† and La Fayette,‡ were recalled.

* Emmanuel Joseph Abbé Sieyès, entered the priesthood at the request of his family, but, having no vocation for the Church, he devoted his energy to politics. A famous pamphlet of his was the means of his obtaining a seat in the National Convention, where he voted in favour of the king's death. He was one of the three consuls who replaced the Directeurs, and became President of the Imperial Senate and member of the Institute. As a writer and a statesman, he was possessed of uncommon ability. Napoleon made him a Count.

† Lazare Nicolas Marguerite Carnot, one of the most distinguished men of the revolutionary period. He was a clever statesman, a talented writer, and, above all his merits, possessed as a soldier a remarkable power of organization. In 1791, having been appointed Minister of War by the Convention, he raised fourteen armies in a few months, and thus saved France from being dismembered. The *Convention Nationale*, as a reward, bestowed upon him the title of *organisateur de la Victoire*.

‡ Marie Jean Paul Roche Yves Gilbert de Mortier, Marquis of La Fayette, famous French statesman and general. With the Count of Rochambeau, he powerfully helped the Americans

Vendée was pacified; murderers and robbers were hunted up and stamped out; and French diplomacy was raised in the eyes of Europe by the choice of respectable agents. Such were the first acts of Bonaparte's government.

After Marengo, this Consul, so much criticised, proves himself acquainted with everything in France: finances, administrations, religion, politics, he knows all the springs of the governmental machine and all the means of working them. He makes use of those waifs of the old *régime* which can serve his purpose. He adapts them to the institutions born from the Revolution. He does the same thing with men, whom he judges according to their talent, and not according to their opinions or to their past. He brings together Girondists and Royalists, *Montagnards* * and *Constitutionnels*,† and expects from

to achieve their independence. He gained his great popularity by heading the people at the taking of the Bastille.

* The extreme radical party in the Convention, whose members often disgraced themselves by their bloodthirsty proposals, but powerfully contributed to the successful defence of the territory against the invasion.

† The partisans of the Constitution accepted by Louis XVI., September 3, 1791.

each only what he can give. With all these elements mixed and combined, he composes the Corinthian metal of which his Government is to be cast; he forms a new France.

He carries out all these modifications without interfering, even for one single hour, or for one single minute, with the working of the governmental machine. He superintends everything. His indefatigable genius provides for all. He displays no obstinacy in carrying out insignificant projects. Whenever unable to fulfil them there and then, he sacrifices them to the aim in view, which, in all cases was always, for him, the greatness of France.

The day came when that peace, which he had bestowed on France, was offered him by all Europe, not excepting England. And this grand result was attained in *two years and three months*.

Such an achievement, no doubt, entitled its author to some rest. But where and when could Bonaparte take it?

Because of his refusal to betray the Revolution and deliver France to Louis XVIII., England prepared for a new coalition; the western provinces of France were full of agents who fostered civil war.

In Paris fresh conspiracies were cropping up every day; the Royalist cut-throats held themselves in readiness to perform their nefarious work, and devised new engines of death.* Bonaparte determined to make an example, and the Duke of Enghien† fell a victim to his resolution. Notwithstanding the reprobation it aroused in Europe, the execution of the unfortunate prince put a stop to the plots and terrified the assassins. The guilt of the Duke d'Enghien, one of the most active princes of the House of Bourbon, cannot be doubted. But that prince resided on foreign territory, and, although the Electorate of Baden had a treaty of extradition with France, it was not permissible by international law

* Allusion to the plots of Pichegru and Cadoudal.

† Louis Antoine Henri de Bourbon-Condé, Duke of Enghien, son of the Duke Louis Henri of Bourbon-Condé and of Princess Louise Marie Thérèse Mathilde d'Orléans. In 1792 he entered the army of his grandfather, Prince of Condé, and fought against France at the battles of Wissemburg and Bersheim, where he displayed much gallantry and considerable military aptitude. Under the pretext that he was connected with the conspiracy plotted against the life of Bonaparte by Pichegru and Cadoudal, the unfortunate Prince was arrested in his own house at Ettenheim by French dragoons, carried off to Strasburg, brought to Paris, tried, and executed in the moat of the fortress of Vincennes, March 21st 1806.

to go and seize him there. State reasons alone can explain that act.

Bonaparte was urged on by events ; he could not stop his progress. For the security of France, for the struggle with England and with Europe, ever carried on against the Revolution, he was obliged to go on centralizing his power constantly. His army had to be increased ; he had to fight all his enemies simultaneously. At last he was on the point of rushing upon England and trying to crush her, when the latter induced Austria to attack him. He then turned his arms against his assailant, and, after defeating her, re-organized Germany, in order that she should no longer be his enemy. In 1806 Prussia was the attacking party, and she was disabled. After a long campaign, Russia, her ally, was vanquished in her turn. Napoleon and Alexander met at Tilsit, and came to an understanding.

Wherever Napoleon tolerated the existence of the old monarchies, they constituted enemies who, notwithstanding the favours heaped on them, despite the promises of their kings, and in utter disregard for their own interests, fell upon France after her first defeat. The whole of Italy had to be taken from the

Bourbon kings and the Lorraine princes. Switzerland had to be freed from the aristocracy of the Cantons. Germany had to be overpowered. All those who were not Napoleon's subjects proved themselves to be his enemies. He, however, spared no efforts in order to render durable the peace he offered, and to point out to Europe that the protection of France was preferable to the subsidies of England! But Napoleon personified the Revolution. The old *régime* was planning a revenge, and by promising to nations a fallacious independence, it made use of them to fetter the country which had saved them.

Until 1808, Napoleon was the Emperor of the French. From that moment events always compelled him to go forward. England's hostility furnished him with new occasions of victory. Fortune assisted his genius, but his ambition ever led him to look beyond the present, and to realise the future in a day. Napoleon was never surprised at the heights he reached. Did he already foresee the possibility of bringing under his sceptre the greater part of Europe to be governed by his brothers, his lieutenants, his feudatories, and his vassals?

A transient necessity imposed itself on Napoleon's

mind, a mind eminently possessed of the perception of reality. His task seems fulfilled. His achievements ensure the security and greatness of France. Yet, when he considers provinces added to provinces, kingdoms added to kingdoms, and that vast Empire spread over Europe and overflowing beyond the frontiers of France, he conceives the idea of an iron frame to hold, until the signing of peace, so many heterogeneous elements in his mighty hand. He is represented as dreaming of the re-establishment of the Western Empire, of an empire similar to the Roman. Such was not his thought. He had to submit to the necessity created by the everlasting and inexorable struggle between England and France. England was alone the mistress of the seas, and she used and abused the privilege she enjoyed. Violating the rights of neutrals more than ever did Napoleon, she bombarded Copenhagen without any declaration of war. In order to vanquish her, and to bring her to bay, was it not necessary for Napoleon to have the sea-board of Europe? The naval omnipotence of England was the cause of the continental blockade, which itself necessitated the extension of the Empire.

Was not Napoleon compelled to interfere with the affairs of Spain, with which, at the outset, he did not wish to have anything to do? The Bourbons appealed to him, and, taking him for judge, besought him to settle their family quarrels. When, at Bayonne, he found himself face to face with that degraded king,* with that unworthy queen, with that minister † ready to undertake any dirty work, with that son suspected of being a parricide, and whose ambition sought an excuse in the inability and stupidity of his father, and in the low instincts of his mother, what was Napoleon to do, what was he to decide? The best plan would undoubtedly have been to have let Spain alone, which had so often brought disaster on France, and to have left the degenerate descendants of Louis XIV. to fight out their own quarrels between themselves. But by leaving them alone Napoleon would have placed Spain in the hands of England. Abstention on his part would have enabled an English army to occupy the whole peninsula as far as the Pyrenees, and to attack

* Charles IV. of Spain.

† Manuel Godoï, or Godoy, Prince de la Paz.

France from behind them. Besides, was it nothing to bring to the Spanish people the laws, the spirit, and the constitution of modern nations, to implant the Revolution in the land of the Inquisition,* and to make a nation of that kingdom?

The Spanish nation is indebted to us for having asserted itself, although it did so against us. In Spain and in Italy, on the Rhine and on the Vistula, Napoleon aroused the slumbering nations, and taught them their rights. No doubt, under the hand of that stern workman (*rude ouvrier*) the tree was sometimes shorn of the branches which seemed most full of life. Sometimes the idea of emancipation seemed dead, when it was merely slumbering. Its awakening was terrible, and it eventually turned against the emancipator.

What matter, then, the transient errors which time has swept away, if the work of European emancipation is such that the action of centuries will only be to consolidate it? Indeed, it is easy to criticise the Napoleonic system, from 1809 to

* The "Tribunal of the Holy Inquisition," as it was called, was abolished by Napoleon in 1808.

1813. Some institutions remained incomplete, others were exaggerated. The imperial aristocracy —a grand conception—had a fatal result. Nearly all its members went over to the enemies of its founder. Instead of swelling the ranks of the army, they crowded ante-rooms and *salons*. Instead of being faithful to their origin, they supported legitimacy,* as though they also were returned *émigrés*.

Of the seeds sown by Napoleon, some ripened, others rotted on the spot. We must not judge him from those of his works that did not come to maturity, but from those which bore fruit. If Napoleon made a mistake in seeking for a faithful ally in Austria conquered by his arms and raised by his generosity, if he thought the alliance between him and her would be made durable by accepting for his wife her Emperor's daughter on whom he had been begged to cast his eyes, was not that the best proof of his sincere desire of securing peace in Europe?

Who wished for the war of 1812? Napoleon or Alexander? When Russia bought from a faithless

* That is, the claims of the Bourbons.

official the rolls of the French army, when she prosecuted her armaments, when she called back her army from the East, when she violated the provisions of the Tilsit and Erfürt conventions, when English influence was reigning openly at St. Petersburg, did Alexander want peace? The letter addressed from Wilna, on July 1, 1812, by Napoleon to Alexander is the reply. Never have grievances been more obvious, never has any declaration been more outspoken, never has right been more evident. But after the four previous coalitions, after having successively incited Prussia, Spain and Austria against us, England's hatred obtained that final effort from Russia. Why did the Emperor stay so long in Moscow? Because he hoped to sign peace there.

This then was his inordinate ambition, his thirst for domination, his sanguinary passion! He offers peace, he sues for it as soon as he is victorious. Who desired peace in 1805, in 1807, in 1809, in 1812, in 1813, if not Napoleon? Had he been vanquished when he offered peace? No, indeed! he offered it on the morrow of his victories, and the Coalition declined it: so long as Napoleon was standing, the Revolution was not crushed.

After Moscow, Napoleon is, so to speak, no longer Emperor. He is only a leader of armies. He struggles inch by inch, gaining the day wherever present, and vanquished wherever his lieutenants command. He is hemmed in by treason. It is in his army, where his allies abandon him in the midst of the action; in his towns, to which the partisans of the Bourbons call the foreigner, and where conspiracies are plotted; in his Councils, where his former Ministers prepare to sell him. Disappointment and lassitude fill the hearts of his generals. He alone, carrying within himself the fate of France, struggles to the last.

When he writes, in his act of abdication: "*There is no personal sacrifice, not even that of my own life, that I am not ready to make in the interests of France,*" will it be asserted that he, who was then holding poison in his clenched fist,* was not sincere? "*And if God wills it not,*" it is, that fate must be accomplished. It is in order that the martyr of St. Helena may give France and mankind his supreme teachings.

* After his abdication at Fontainebleau, Napoleon is reported to have expressed his intention to commit suicide.

To exchange a throne like his for the principality of Elba—what a fall for Napoleon! And yet, he would have accepted that sacrifice; he would have lived there, had he been left alone and had not that rock echoed the moans of France. He met her passionate appeal with his usual decision. He meets with an enthusiastic reception from Fréjus to Paris. He re-enters the Tuileries as a Sovereign, but cherishes no longer the re-establishment of the old Empire. He feels that the nation wants liberty, and expects more latitude from its ruler. He adapts himself to events in thorough earnest. Whom does he summon to his Councils? Benjamin Constant,* whom he intrusts with the drafting of the *Acte addi-*

* Constant de Rebecque, born at Lausanne, and descended from a Protestant family whose ancestors had migrated to Switzerland after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. He studied at Oxford and at Erlangen, and soon developed the brilliant gifts nature had bestowed on him. He was some time chamberlain of the Duke of Brunswick. After the French Revolution, he obtained permission to be naturalized. He had been a supporter of Bonaparte, but denounced him when he became Emperor. After the return from Elba, he embraced the Imperial cause, and was appointed Councillor of State. Under the Restoration, he became one of the most talented writers and speakers of the Liberal opposition.

*tionnel**; Carnot, whom he appoints Minister of the Interior. As a lofty mind, despising half-measures, he goes straight to his aim and does not haggle over concessions.

What a pity it is that instead of accepting a Parliamentary system similar to that of England, he did not develop consular institutions in a more representative sense! What a pity he should have been unable to organize his government on the basis he alluded to in the memorable assembly of the *Champ de Mai*!† Time and events did not permit him to do so.

Already in the Napoleon of the *Champ de Mai* we detect the Napoleon of St. Helena, the man who, when summing up his life, can judge it, can discern his own errors and point out those of his adversaries, can indicate in his work which were the transitory measures he was compelled to take, and which the

* The name given to the liberal modifications introduced into the Imperial Constitution after the return from Elba.

† The ceremony held June 1, 1814 (instead of May 26, as first intended), in view of proclaiming the results of the votes for and against the adoption of the provisions of the *Acte additionnel* (1,300,000 ayes and 4,206 nays).

institutions he intended to last. He foresees the future, he marks out the aim of nations; and though the prisoner of kings, he compels them to listen to his lessons. Liberty then appears to his mind as the necessity of modern society. He foresees the Republic becoming the government of democracies.

Rising above the vain passions with which dynastic interests might still have inspired him, he sees the sacred rights of civilization towering above petty party-hatred. And, as if he had guessed the dangers civilization was running, he warns the nation: "Woe be to France, if she brings about the triumph of her invaders by her internal discords!"

I have spoken my opinion, but cannot speak the whole of it. My object has been to judge the man from his work, and to state what that work has been, as far as I understand it. It still remains to show the private man. He was kind and feeling. Amidst the horrors of war, he deplored its cruelties and endeavoured to allay them. At the time of his divorce, after the harrowing reproaches of Josephine, he remained for whole hours crushed beneath his silent grief. All the time that Marie Louise was *enceinte*, his solicitude was never-failing. During the *accouche-*

ment, he was anxious to save the mother's life *in preference to* that of the child. After the birth of the King of Rome,* Napoleon bestowed the most attentive care on Marie Louise. On leaving public ceremonies—which he wished to be imposing—he sought relief from the burthen of government in home life, the charms of which he had appreciated in youth. His transient outbursts of passion, often preconcerted, proceeded from his head, not from his heart. He soon forgot all about them, and in most cases forgave. On hearing of the abdication and flight of Louis, King of Holland, he was much distressed, and exclaimed: "I brought him up with the scanty resources of my pay as lieutenant of artillery. I shared with him my crust and my bed." He came to the assistance of Carnot. He provided for the old age of Chénier,† of the Abbé

* Afterwards Duke of Reichstadt. The heir apparent to the crown of Austria bore the title of King of the Romans. The title of King of Rome was possibly given to Napoleon's son for that reason.

† Chénier (Marie Joseph Blaise de), a French nobleman and one of the brothers of the unfortunate André Chénier (executed as Royalist on Thermidor 7, year III.—July 25, 1794), was almost as gifted a poet as the latter. After he had served

Sicard* and of Palissot.† Though he is depicted as incapable of inspiring or of experiencing affection, he had friends named Desaix,‡ Lannes,§ Muiron,‖ Duroc,¶

in the army, he devoted his time to literature and to the defence of his political views. He was a member of the National Convention, and voted for the death of Louis XVI. He was afterwards member of the Council of the Five Hundred and of the Tribunate. He was one of the first members of the Institute of France, after its creation by Napoleon. In politics, he belonged to the moderate section of the Jacobins, and not, as often said, to the school of the Terrorists.

* Roch Ambroise Cucurron Sicard, one of the most able disciples and successors of the famous Abbé de l'Epée as head of the Paris *École des Sourds-muets*, for the education of the deaf and dumb.

† Charles Palissot de Montenoy, a talented pamphleteer.

‡ Louis Charles Antoine Desaix (sometimes written Des Aix) de Végoux, a French nobleman, and one of the best and most intrepid generals of the First Republic. He was killed whilst charging the Austrians at the head of his troops at Marengo (June 14, 1800).

§ Jean Lannes, Marshal of France, Duke of Montebello. A cannon-shot carried off both his legs at the battle of Lobau, and he died from gangrene resulting from amputation.

‖ Bonaparte's favourite *aide-de-camp*, was killed at the battle of Arcola, whilst shielding him with his body.

¶ Gérard Christophe Michel Duroc, Duke of Frioul, Grand Marshal of the Palace, was killed by a cannon-shot at the battle of Wurtzen.

Bessières,* and Caulaincourt.† He was not lavish of praise, but expressed his satisfaction by means of affectionate treatment, and rewards devised with delicacy. His domestic servants themselves experienced his indulgence and regard. A police report informed him that he was accused of having, in a moment of fear, discharged at his secretary a pistol he always carried with him, and to have shot him dead! The person who read that report to him was Méneval himself, that very secretary, who, more than anybody else, praises the Emperor's good nature.

Such is the man. He discloses himself fully in his letters to Josephine and to Marie Louise, in those to my grandmother, to my uncles, and to my father. They are all published. Libellers paid no attention to them. I pay no attention to the gossiping reports

* Jean Baptiste Bessières, Duke of Istria, Imperial Marshal and one of the cleverest lieutenants of Napoleon, was killed by a cannon-shot received whilst reconnoitring the enemy's position, on the eve of the battle of Lutzen.

† Armand Augustin Louis, Marquis de Caulaincourt, Duke of Vicenza, and general of division. He was sent by Napoleon to St. Petersburg as ambassador, and appointed aide-de-camp and grand equerry to Napoleon after his return. He has been falsely accused of having been concerned in the arrest of the Duke d'Enghien.

of dismissed chambermaids and valets. Libellers may write what they please, the great name will remain engraved on the people's heart.

In Napoleon's system we must seek teachings rather than models.

He could not found the government of the future. When we contrast his civil and political institutions, we clearly see that he contemplated finishing the edifice of which he merely laid the foundations.

He understood that, on that still shifting ground, it was not possible to raise a permanent structure, and that democracy should be given time to consolidate its conquests, before settling the form it would regard as a guarantee of its rights.

The political problem remains, therefore, unsolved. Its solution will have to be found by our generation.

A common enough error consists in mistaking the social work of Napoleon for his political work, in mixing and confusing them, and in failing to separate from the main work that which was but transient and accidental.

And yet, can it be asserted that no principle of political organization is to be derived from Napoleon's work?

I am far from thinking so. The more I apply my mind to that important question, the more I remain convinced that, in that vast and incomplete work, the true nature of which has so often been equally distorted by the apologists, and by the detractors of Napoleon, there is the fundamental, the essential principle of the government of French democracy.

That principle is that an old society like ours obeys traditional necessities, which democracy transforms without removing them, and that, in that society, true government does not exist when the executive power does not proceed from a direct, special, and distinct mandate, when the legislative power is not limited to the sphere within which debate and control are to operate.

The necessities of war, the excitement of exalted power caused that grand conception—which, nevertheless, emanates from the imperial system — to deviate in its course. It is our duty to take it up in its democratic reality and apply it earnestly to the Republic, of which it may become the safest guarantee.

Our parliamentary *régime*, which the differences of public opinion might suffice to render impracti-

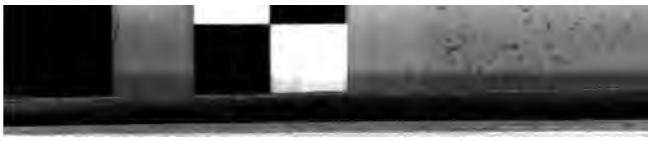
cable, and the experiment of which entails such heavy cost, is denounced and condemned by all shrewd minds.

Thus arises the alternative: the country will either submit to the dictatorship of a single chamber, or it will return to the true notion of a democratic and representative government.

In the latter case, and whatever demagogues and ignorant people may say, we shall have to follow the luminous furrow cut by Napoleon. The work summed up in that name has been variously appreciated by public opinion. Cursed by the Liberals of the monarchical school, whose oligarchy it broke, its defence was long taken up by democrats as the safeguard of the principles of the Revolution. It is now being sapped by utopians whose reforming spirit loses itself in chimeras.

The organization bequeathed to us by Napoleon will once more become the supreme guarantee of a society anxious to live and to develop itself by progress.

It is my boast to range myself amongst those who are not afraid of any of the reforms needed by our economical and social situation. I am, nevertheless,

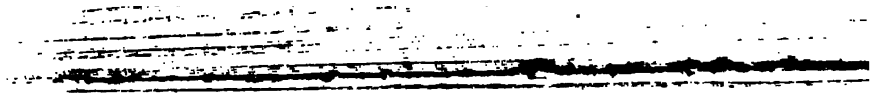


of opinion that France will be in imminent peril the day when our civil institutions are threatened in their very existence.

I must close. It is not my object to discuss politics here.

My sole aim has been to remind the detractors of Napoleon of the respect due to history.

As heir to that great name, it is by appealing to history that I have defended the memory of the hero.



APPENDIX.

PART I.

TREATY OF REICHENBACH,

JUNE 27, 1813.

ARTICLE 1.—His Majesty the Emperor of Austria having invited the courts of Russia and of Prussia to enter, under his mediation, into negotiations with France, with a view to a preliminary peace that may serve as basis to a general peace, and His Majesty having settled the conditions he believes indispensable to the reconstitution of a state of equilibrium and durable tranquillity in Europe, *binds himself to declare war on France*, and to join his arms to those of Russia and Prussia, if, on or before the 20th day of July of this year, France has not accepted those conditions.*

* This *date* was altered, at the same time as that of the armistice to August 10, as the *extreme limit*.

ARTICLE 2.—The conditions mentioned in the foregoing article are the following: (1) The dissolution of the Duchy of Warsaw, and the division of the provinces composing it between Austria, Russia, and Prussia, according to arrangements to be settled between those three Powers, without any intervention from the French Government. (2) The aggrandisement of Prussia consequent upon that division, and by means of the cession of the town and district of Dantzic; the evacuation of all the fortresses in the Prussian states and in the Duchy of Warsaw, which are at the present time in the occupation of the French troops. (3) The restitution of the Illyrian provinces to Austria. (4) The reconstitution of the Hanse towns, at least of Hamburg and Lübeck with their former territories, as free towns, independent of any foreign league or confederation, and a subsequent arrangement, comprised in the provisions of the general peace, respecting the cession of the other portions of the 32nd military division.

ARTICLE 3.—In case these conditions are not accepted by France, Austria binds herself to prosecute immediately, by armed force, the aim she will have failed to secure by negotiations, and to employ to that effect all her available forces.

ARTICLE. 4.—Reciprocally, the two Courts of Russia and Prussia engage to act henceforth in concert with Austria in the capacity of allies, and

each with those of her forces available at the time.

ARTICLE 5.—Notwithstanding that they hereby bind themselves to take the field with the whole of their forces, the above-mentioned Powers further agree to maintain the full number of those forces during the whole of the war, viz. Austria, at least a hundred and fifty thousand men, Russia a hundred and fifty thousand men at the least, and Prussia eighty thousand men, without reckoning the garrisons entrusted with home defence. It is well understood that, in conformity with the preceding articles, His Majesty the Emperor, and their Majesties the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia agree mutually and faithfully to increase the number of their forces, according to their ability to do so.

ARTICLE 6.—As soon as war shall have begun, the three allied Courts shall regard, as the aim of their simultaneous efforts, the execution of the articles expressed by the Russian and Prussian Cabinets in their notes of May 16, which shall be construed in the widest acceptation.*

* Retrocession of Hanover to England; France to give up the countries annexed under the name of the 32nd military division, and restitution of the German provinces possessed by *French princes*; absolute independence of the intermediate States comprised between *the Rhine and the Alps*, on one hand,

ARTICLE 7.—The three Courts agree formally not to enter into any preliminary negotiation, either for war or for peace, except by mutual consent.

ARTICLE 8.—Arrangements shall be concluded, as promptly as possible, in view of a military convention respecting the simultaneous operations of the campaign, and, to that effect, the allied Courts shall severally appoint superior officers who shall arrange and settle with the commander-in-chief of the Austrian army all necessary and eventual measures.

ARTICLE 9.—The allied Courts most solemnly bind themselves not to listen to any insinuation or proposal which might be addressed to them directly or indirectly by the French Cabinet during the armistice.

ARTICLE 10.—The Court of Vienna also agrees to decline all proposals on the part of France, which might be contrary to the interest of the allied Courts or opposed to the principles forming the basis of the present convention.

ARTICLE 11.—The allied Courts agree ever to keep strictly secret this convention, and not to communicate it even to any of their allies without having previously obtained the assent of Austria.

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and, on the other, reconstitution of the frontiers of Austria and Prussia on the basis of 1805 (secret clauses of the Treaty of Toeplitz, signed September 8, 1813).

ARTICLE 12.—The present convention shall be ratified by the high contracting powers within six days, or sooner, if possible.

In witness whereof, the respective plenipotentiaries have signed the present convention under their own hands and seals.

At Reichenbach, June 27, 1813.

Signed: Count VON STADION.*
Count VON NESSELRODE.†
Baron VON HARDENBERG.‡

* John Philip Charles Joseph, Count von Stadion, famous Austrian diplomatist and statesman; was bitterly opposed to Napoleon.

† Charles Robert, Count von Nesselrode, a famous Russian statesman, succeeded Count Capo d'Istria as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Like the latter, he was rather Liberal in his views.

‡ Charles Augustus, Baron von Hardenberg, one of the cleverest Prussian statesmen. He succeeded Count von Haugwitz in the direction of the Berlin Foreign Office. He was one of the bitterest adversaries of Napoleon.

PART II.

ACCOUNT OF THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN THE EMPEROR AND COUNT VON METTERNICH, ON JUNE 23, 1813.

"So you have come, Metternich," said Napoleon on seeing him, "you are welcome. But, if you wish for peace, why come so late? We have already lost a month, and your mediation grows almost hostile by reason of its inactivity. It appears that it suits you no longer to guarantee the integrity of the French Empire. Let it be so. But why did you not say so before? Why did you not frankly inform me of it on my return from Russia, by Bubna,* or, more recently, by Schwarzenberg? I might, perhaps, have been in time to modify my plans: I might not even have entered the field.

"By allowing me to get exhausted by new efforts, you doubtless relied on less rapid events. Victory crowned those bold efforts. I win two

* Ferdinand, Count of Bubna-Littiz, Austrian ambassador to Paris, and a distinguished statesman. As a soldier, he won the exalted rank of field-marshal at the battle of Wagram, although his military aptitude never equalled his ability as a statesman and diplomatist.

battles. My enemies, weakened, are on the point of recovering from their illusions; you suddenly glide in between us. You speak to me of armistice and mediation, to them of alliance. You embroil everything. But for your fatal intervention, peace would now be signed with the Allies.

"What have hitherto been the results of the armistice? I am not acquainted with any other than the two treaties of Reichenbach, which England has just wrung from Prussia and Russia. Another treaty with a third Power is also mentioned. But M. de Stadion is on the spot, Metternich, and you ought to be better informed than I on that subject.

"Admit, that since Austria assumed the title of mediator, she no longer sides with me; that she is no longer impartial; she is hostile. You were on the point of declaring against us, when the victory of Lützen startled you. Seeing me still so powerful, you felt it necessary to develop your strength, and were anxious to gain time.

"To-day, your 200,000 men are ready. Schwarzenberg commands them. He assembles them, near by, behind the curtain formed by the mountains of Bohemia. And, because you believe yourselves in a position to dictate the law, you come to me. The law, indeed! And why, pray, do you wish to dictate it only to me? Am I no longer the same man whom you defended yesterday? If you are really a mediator, why not, at least, hold the balance even?

"I have guessed your intentions, Metternich: your Cabinet wishes to take advantage of my difficulties, and increase them as much as possible, in order to recover the whole or part of what has been lost. The main point is for you to ascertain whether you can obtain a ransom from me without fighting, or whether you will have to rank openly with my enemies. You are not yet quite sure which alternative will be most advantageous, and, perhaps, you only come here to ascertain it. Well! I do not refuse to come to terms. What do you want?"

This was a sharp attack. M. de Metternich met it with a complete array of diplomatic phrases. The only advantage the Emperor, his master, was jealous of acquiring, was the influence which would impart to the Cabinets of Europe the spirit of moderation, and the respect of the rights and possessions of independent States, with which he is himself animated. Austria is desirous of establishing a state of things which, by a wise re-partition of power, would place the guarantee of peace under the protection of a confederation of independent States.

"Explain yourself," interrupted the Emperor, "and let us come to the point. But remember that I am a soldier more ready to overcome than to yield.* I offered you Illyria as the price of your neutrality. Are you satisfied? My army is quite

* "*Je suis un soldat qui sait mieux rompre que plier!*"

sufficient to bring the Russians and the Prussians to terms, and your neutrality is all I ask."

"Why, Sire," replied quickly M. de Metternich, "should your Majesty remain unsupported in the contest? Why should you not double your forces? You can do so, Sire, for it rests entirely with you to make use of them. Indeed, things have reached a climax, and we can no longer remain neutral: we must declare either for or against you."

Then the conversation became almost inaudible, and the Emperor led M. de Metternich to the Map-room.* After a rather long interval, the Emperor again raised his voice, and said:

"What! not only Illyria, but half Italy, and the return of the Pope to Rome! the giving up of Spain, Holland, the Rhine confederation and Switzerland! That is what you call the spirit of moderation with which you are animated! You only think of taking advantage of every opportunity. Your sole preoccupation is to transfer your alliance from one camp to the other, in order to be always in that in which a share of plunder is to be had, and you speak of your respect for the rights of independent States! In fact, you want Italy, Russia wishes for Poland, Sweden for Norway, Prussia wants Saxony, and England insists on the possession of Holland and Belgium. In short, peace is only a pretext: you are all long-

* *Cabinet des Cartes.*

ing for the dismemberment of the French Empire! And to realise such a scheme, Austria thinks it is sufficient for her to declare herself! You expect here, by a stroke of the pen, to bring down the ramparts of Dantzig, Küstrin, Glogau, Magdeburg, Wesel, Mayence, Antwerp, Alessandria, Mantua, and of all the strongest fortresses of Europe, the keys of which I only obtained after numerous victories! As for me, docile to your policy, I should have to evacuate Europe, half of which I still occupy, to bring back my legions behind the Rhine, the Alps, and the Pyrenees, as though I had been vanquished; and, subscribing to a treaty which would only amount to a vast capitulation, I should thus surrender to my enemies, and rely, for a doubtful future, upon the generosity of the very men whom I have now crushed! At a time when my colours are still flying over the mouths of the Vistula and the banks of the Oder, when a victorious army is threatening Berlin and Breslau, when I am myself here at the head of three hundred thousand men, Austria, without striking a blow, without even drawing the sword, presumes to compel me to subscribe to such terms! without drawing the sword! Such pretension is indeed outrageous! And it is my father-in-law who entertains such a design! It is he who sends you! In what position does he then wish to place me towards the French people? He is strangely mistaken if he believes that in France a mutilated throne can shelter his daughter and his

grandson? Ah! Metternich, how much did England give to decide you to act thus towards me?"

On hearing those words, which Napoleon was unable to control, Metternich changed colour. Deep silence followed, and, with long strides, they both continued pacing across the room. The Emperor's hat fell on the floor. They repeatedly passed it. On any other occasion, M. de Metternich would have hastened to pick it up. In this instance, he let the Emperor do so himself.

Some time elapsed before they both recovered.

Napoleon, having calmed himself, resumed the conversation. He declared that peace would not yet be despaired of by him, if Austria would consent at last to listen to her own interests. He further insisted on the summoning of the Congress, and formally requested that, in case hostilities should again begin, negotiations should still be prosecuted, in order that an opportunity might yet be left open for the reconciliation of nations.

When parting with M. de Metternich, the Emperor expressly informed him that the cession of Illyria was not his last word.

THE END.

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